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PRACTICAL EVANGELISM

WILLIAM H. BURGWIN



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PRACTICAL EVANGELISM

By
WILLIAM H. BURGWIN



THE METHODIST BOOK CONCERN
New York Cincinnati

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**TO
THE CHURCHES**

**He has been privileged to serve
and**

Which have done so much for him

**This Book is Dedicated
BY THE AUTHOR**

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FOREWORD

THE author, in presenting this modest treatise on Practical Evangelism, does not pose as an expert in religious psychology, though he has some knowledge of the findings of the investigators in this field. He believes his own point of view is accurately described by the word "practical." As an active pastor for nearly nineteen years, he offers a digest of his own ministerial experience as related to evangelism, feeling sure that such a statement, had it been put into his hands at the beginning of his ministry, would have added greatly to his efficiency. He dares hope that this expression may serve as an index finger, pointing at least an occasional worker, whether minister or layman, even in the earlier years of his activity, to the highway of assured success.

INTRODUCTION

To be successful, evangelism must be practical. I mean not only as to principle and methods, but more especially as to results. Men have had fine ideals as to evangelism, where the attempt to fulfill them has not been realized. Men have arranged elaborate systems of evangelistic work, where the product has been inconsiderable. By "Practical Evangelism" I understand something which not only can be applied to given situations, but can be depended upon for permanent product.

In these days when so much is being heard about efficiency in the work of the world, we should not hesitate to apply to our religious activity the test bred of the inquiry, "Is it worth while?" To be worth while, the plan must work; the campaign must bear

fruit; the fruit must abide. Men should come out of our evangelistic labor, not merely as men who have had rare spiritual experience, but as men ready to have their experiences translated into work for the world.

I believe the author is giving us something of value. I am sure that he proceeds upon the right line when he lays down as a fundamental the sense of the spiritual underlying the practical. That the Spirit of God strives with men, and that men may heed the Spirit and find God—this is not only good theology but sound psychology, upon which men ought always to build in any plans for Christian evangelism.

Who will not be in accord with the author in laying the emphasis, as he does, upon the use of Spirit-filled men, strong in the Word and in prayer? It is a needed note in the work of the Kingdom to-day, that the church should come to realize its birthright

and its possessions so that men and women everywhere, wrought upon by the Spirit of God, trusting much in the use of the Bible and prayer, may be employed as the force whereby God shall find new conquests in the world.

THEODORE S. HENDERSON.



CHAPTER I

TWICE-BORN MEN

WITH great personal benefit I have read and reread Mr. Harold Begbie's books *Twice Born Men* and *Souls in Action*, published in England as, respectively, *Broken Earthenware* and *In the Hands of the Potter*. Each book has a significant subtitle, the first, "A Clinic in Regeneration," the second, "The Crucible of the New Life." All of these titles are suggestive and truly descriptive of the character of the books. Both books, I take it, have their primary inspiration, as Mr. Begbie testifies of *Twice Born Men*, in Professor William James's book *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. "The purpose of this book, which I venture to describe as a footnote in narrative to Professor James's famous work," says the author in the Preface, "is to bring home to men's minds

this fact concerning conversion, that, whatever it may be, *conversion is the only means by which a radically bad person can be changed into a radically good person.*" The difference between the two books is seen not merely in the localities where the subjects are found. *Twice Born Men* tells of "sudden, violent, and passionate conversion," while *Souls in Action* cites cases "in which a gradual and quite tranquil change of heart leads to the new birth." Another difference: "In *Twice Born Men* the testators were all men, and of the humblest classes in the community, some of them the very lees and dregs of society," whereas in *Souls in Action* most of the stories concern women, and in all cases the strata of society are above the depths. Having before him Professor James's treatise on Religious Experience, with its carefully stated definition of conversion—"to be converted," "to be regenerated," "to receive grace," "to expe-

rience religion,' 'to gain assurance' are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy, in consequence of its superior hold upon religious realities"—Mr. Begbie goes forth into the depths of a London slum, where the serpent and the tiger, the fang and the claw nature of humanity are in the ascendant, and there, where a Salvation Army barracks lays siege and wins miraculous triumphs, he finds "The Puncher," "Old Born Drunk," "Rags and Bones," and the rest. Or, in the West London Mission, a monument to the vision, devotion, and enthusiasm of Hugh Price Hughes, where the Wesleyan Methodists qualify grandly as exponents of the church militant, sustaining "an army ever at war against all that is vile, base, and degrading, an army ever exhil-

arated by the zest of conflict and forcible with the hardihood of active service, an army whose battle song should be no morbid whine after individual mercy," the author leads us to a community such as the inquirer must seek "if he would really understand the place and power of Christianity in the destinies of the human race," and stirs our blood as we read of "The Flowing Tide," "Betrayed," "The Girl and Her Lover," among others, ending with three tales, told under the caption, "Sister Agatha's Way," delineating the personality, methods, and triumphs of one consecrated soldier of Jesus Christ. All of which means that Mr. Begbie divested himself of his prejudices pro and con, and in the spirit of modern science, by a true laboratory method, proved his accepted definition of conversion.

It is not my purpose to review the lives of the twice-born men and women whom Mr. Begbie has made familiar

to every Christian community in the English-speaking world. That work has been done, with unwonted enthusiasm, not only by religious journals, but even by the secular press. For this there is occasion for gratitude. Yet there is a certain note in comments which may be heard, as well as in reviews which have been printed, against which I would respectfully protest. My objection is not against Mr. Begbie's thorough service to Christianity and the world, but against a possible inference that there is a new discovery in that which he relates, or that a lost art has been brought to light. Mr. Begbie makes no such claim. Such moral miracles as these books exploit are as old as Christianity and as recent as to-day. They can be verified, I believe, wherever in Christendom an earnest Christian minister has been devoted to his holy calling for a short term of years. Often, in a local community, they may

not become generally known because of the embarrassment which such revelation would bring to individuals and families. Even the secret of such marvels of grace may be known. There are two great principles of divine procedure which pertain. First, *God is now, as he ever has been, reaching out for all men by his Holy Spirit.* It is the peculiar office of the Spirit of God to "convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16. 8). It is true too that the warning stands, "Quench not the Spirit" (1 Thess. 5. 19), "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 4. 30), and with good reason, for even in the days of Noah, before the Deluge, "Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not strive with man forever" (Gen. 6. 3). From which we conclude that the Holy Spirit at some time or times, perhaps on many different occasions,

knocks at the door of every individual life. But he is not always appealing, and the recipient of this divine favor who resists knows not when the Spirit may depart, grieved away by human obstinacy, back of which always is sin. The second principle is this: *The man who follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit will find God.* The converts on the day of Pentecost were newborn men, "and they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship" (Acts 2. 42), not merely because they heard the apostles' preaching, but because that preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and with power, and because they were not disobedient; they followed the Holy Spirit's guidance. It was ever thus. Saint Augustine, Wycliffe, Huss, Luther, Knox, the Wesleys, every other great Christian soul and every Christian convert—all tell the same story. Mr. Begbie demonstrates these truths in his books. This may not have been

his purpose. He started out to put Professor James's definition of conversion to a rigid scientific test, and demonstration of these principles is a result. He does not claim to discover anything which is new; he does not reveal a lost art. He simply proves the conquering power of the Christian religion under most disadvantageous conditions. Surely, if any Christian worker, toiling in this age of materialism, has lost heart and questions the potency of his message, these tales should bring back courage and fill with abounding energy, for, given the devotion, what has been done in the most difficult places can be accomplished in more favorable surroundings. As a matter of fact, just such results are being achieved daily. As a humble laborer in Christ's vineyard I am so presumptuous as to assert that in my own ministry these great principles have been demonstrated many times to my complete satisfaction. I have

not the slightest doubt that thousands of Christian ministers can recite just such triumphs of grace. In detailing briefly certain cases in my own work, my purpose is to embolden Christian workers everywhere, convinced that God can work and is working, through his servants, to conquer the world for righteousness.

In a city in Connecticut where I was pastor, friends informed me of the arrival of a family of Methodists on their street. I called and gained permission to secure the transfer of membership of the wife and mother, but only after I had promised to visit the husband and interview him personally as to his religious life. I kept my pledge, calling a number of times, enjoying interesting conversations, finally winning this man for Jesus Christ. His story is an unusual one. His mother died when he was young. There were other children. After a time the father introduced a

stepmother into the home. The new wife had little liking for the children. Soon, their father supporting them, they were committed to a so-called home, where there was no specific religious instruction, though there was moral training. This husband and father testified that he had never been taught to pray, that he did not know how, and that he never had prayed. Yet it was evident he was a man of distinct religious aptitudes. He respected his wife's religion. He wanted his children reared as Christians. He was gentle in speech and action. He was willing to attend church services, and did so. Naturally enough, he did not feel that he was qualified for church membership, but he was willing to be guided. He had been worshiping with us for some time. I felt the day had come to bring matters to a decision. I called at his home on a Saturday evening preceding the first Sunday of the month.

I did my best to engage him in religious conversation, but without avail. At length, deciding that, after all, the occasion was not propitious, I prepared to leave. We—the husband, the wife, and the pastor—were standing in the parlor and the greetings of the departing guest had been made, when the husband, speaking my name and looking me straight in the eye, said: “Wait a moment. I did something last night I never did before. I have not told my wife as yet. You will be interested. I had been at lodge over at W——. We had been doing some impressive work, and as I was walking home in the beautiful, clear night, with stars overhead and mystery everywhere, I was deeply moved with the thought of God. As soon as I got into the house I went down on my knees in prayer.” Needless to say, I was completely surprised. Evidently, the religious had been the uppermost idea in the man’s mind,

but I had not been able to discover it, though that was my particular purpose that evening. I did not leave the home as I had intended. We prayed together. There was extended Christian communion. The outcome was that the man was received on probation the next morning, became a full member of the church in due time, and is now an official member. Only last April we reviewed his experience in conversation together with a group of friends. To it he added his testimony that the religious life is profitable not only for spiritual but for secular interests as well; that his firm has much greater confidence in him than formerly, and that, as an expert mechanic, he now holds a position of great responsibility. Is not my contention established by this man's experience? God, by his Holy Spirit, was reaching after his creature. The man was responsive to the divine guidance, and he found God.

A number of personal histories are connected vividly with work done in a densely populated district of the greater New York. Soon after that pastorate began I was called on an emergency case to a home in a tenement where a mother with a newborn babe was in great distress. Her husband, crazed by liquor, had come home, dragged his wife from the bed, kicked her, and otherwise treated her cruelly. Medical ministries were provided. The woman recovered and her husband became sober. He was sincerely penitent for what he had done. The pastor was summoned to baptize the baby, which he did. The children were in the Sunday school. Calls were made occasionally at the home—a comfortable one, as a rule. The husband was a skillful artisan. His great enemy was drink, but he was not an habitual drunkard. Nearly five years passed. God's Spirit had followed him all those years. Special

meetings of deep interest were being conducted in the church. This artisan attended the meetings, though he rarely had been seen at the services before. The Holy Spirit gripped the man. He was converted. Subsequent pastors have testified as to his fidelity. A little more than a year ago, when on a visit to the old charge, I met him and he reaffirmed his allegiance to Jesus Christ. His wife has been no encouragement to him, but he stands fast in his faith, a marvel of the divine grace.

It may have been a year after I had been called to minister to the mother in distress that I noticed a strange man of middle age in company with a young man at an evening service. The young man was well known to me. His story too is inviting, but that is another tale. The two men were present week after week at the Sunday evening service, and sat always in about the same

place. The stranger was interested. The young man came to me one day and asked me to speak to his friend if I could get a chance without too much effort. He was fearful any obtrusive action might be repelling. It was not necessary for me to seek the stranger; he came to me. He had attended some twelve or more regular services. He asked me if I could give him the time for religious counsel. Of course I could. I did. His story came out in fragments during a number of conversations. He was born in a house on the Newmarket racetrack in England. He had been trained as a horse jockey. He had ridden on all the great tracks of Europe until he became too heavy for that profession. He drifted to the West Indies. He married. Finally, some twenty-five years before, he came to the United States. He knew a horse from hoof to ear-tip, and, while he had little school education, was known

as "doctor" and had charge of the horses of a large corporation. He told me that he had not been in a church for many years, excepting when he took the children to a neighboring Episcopal church for baptism, until about three months before; that during twenty-five years he had never been free from liquor, though he had been able usually to take care of himself and always had provided for his family; that having heard the gospel preached for five or six weeks, he had felt there was something wrong with him, and that he had quit drinking and had not tasted a drop in over six weeks. He came to the prayer meeting and related his experience. He became a faithful member of the church. I have lost track of him of late, but I am confident that he too illustrates the mighty power of God's grace to seek and to save lost souls.

The form of a sturdy, red-faced Englishman fills my mind's eye. He

was in his prime, the head of a family which had moved next to the church. The children came to the Sunday school; the mother and one older child presented church letters. An attractive family. Our deaconess became a welcome guest in the home. The father was not religious. He said he was able to take care of himself; he didn't need God to look after him. For more than forty years he had managed to go it alone; guessed he could manage his affairs to the end of the chapter. If the wife wanted to go to church, well and good; and it was all right enough for the children; wouldn't hurt 'em anyway. Evidently a difficult case. At length we were in the midst of a revival campaign. The deaconess was drawn to the independent spirit at the head of the nearby household. He promised her that he would attend the meetings, and he kept his word. A Sunday night service came. He was there—

not for the first time. He was touched. He sat in the end of a seat next to one of the aisles. As the invitation was given he placed his foot in the aisle; there he remained, partly out of his seat, halting between two opinions, his face flushed and troubled. The altar service proceeded. I thought of going to him, but something held me back. The meeting was dismissed. He was at the Tuesday evening service. His face was a study. He was intense. The invitation was given; his foot was in the aisle again; but he did not come. The preacher pleaded for decision. "Feeling isn't enough! Judgment as to right isn't enough! A convicting conscience will not save! The will—the *will*—must assert itself!" This was the plea. The man's intensity increased. O, a battle royal was being fought in a man's breast in yonder pew, all the forces of habit and all the fiends of hell arrayed against one soul-troubled mortal. Sev-

eral times between prayers and hymns the same invitation in different ways was given. All the time a yielding was evident. Finally, in response to the appeal, "Who will come? Who will?" several times repeated, this self-sufficient man, the flush still on his determined face, shouted, "I will!" sprang to his feet and literally ran to the altar. Yes, he was converted, and there was glory in that ruddy face. He was a stationary engineer and had a responsible position. He told us that he had spent the best part of two days on top of one of the boilers wrestling with God in prayer; that he had scarcely closed his eyes for two nights; that the struggle was simply awful, and that he found relief only when he said "I will," and surrendered to Jesus Christ. His eldest son, a young man, and a younger son were converted during the same meetings. The man has had many vicissitudes in the intervening years, but when I saw

him about fourteen months ago the glow was still in his face. This was not a human accomplishment. God honored the efforts of his servants, and this engineer became a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The church had been prepared for special revival effort. A famous evangelist was to begin work on a certain Sunday. Three meetings had been held during the preceding week. Friday night came, with a congregation of a hundred, possibly. There were several strangers present. One woman in particular was profoundly stirred, was even moved to tears. She responded to the invitation, and with other strangers, who were her friends, and practically the whole congregation, came forward to the altar. The pastor conversed with the seekers and was able to help all excepting the woman, who was weeping as though her heart was broken—as it was. Prayer was offered, earnest, searching

prayer. But prayer and exhortation were apparently futile. Finally the pastor was impressed to request all to join aloud in the Lord's Prayer. He believes that the Spirit of God moved him to urge the people to pronounce no petition of that model prayer unless it could be done sincerely. Then, very deliberately, he led the praying people, every petition standing out by itself. The heart-broken woman recited petition after petition clearly and firmly until "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive them that trespass against us" was reached. She hesitated; she struggled. The conflict was desperate. There was a great sob; it came from the depths. The fountains of the deep were broken up. Slowly, but earnestly, she pronounced the difficult words. In so doing she conquered a vengeful, hateful temper, which, not without reason, had taken possession of her. I learned her story soon thereafter.

She and her husband had been officers and successful workers in the Salvation Army—captains, as I remember it. They were happy in their work. Children were born to them. One little girl was a cripple. The husband sinned, became a race-track gambler, and left his family. For a time he supported them well. Then remittances ceased. Trying times came. The wife too had left the Army. She had friends there, but would rather suffer than betray her need and sorrow. It seemed so heartless that her husband should desert his crippled child. She could not forgive him, and she would not! Where was God, that he could allow such wickedness? She found God. She forgave her husband, in spite of his infidelity, and was herself forgiven of God. When last I heard from her she had a responsible position in connection with a Volunteers of America Home in a neighboring State. In spite of her sorrow she became a

happy and efficient servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Following an after-meeting on a Sunday evening, a German woman approached the pastor somewhat timidly and in imperfect English said she wished to join the Methodist Church, and that her husband would join with her. Inquiry developed the fact that she had been reared in Germany as a Roman Catholic, had come to America when fifteen years of age, and that a New Testament in German had been given her at Castle Garden. She had never read that book before. It was fascinating. When her mother discovered her possession she took it from her, warning her of serious consequences from the reading thereof. She honored her mother's command, though sad of heart. After her marriage to a man nominally a Lutheran she purchased a Bible in German. It was, indeed, a lamp to her feet and a light to her path. Yet she was

loyal to the Roman Church. She attended its services. Her children were baptized by its priests. But as the boys approached youthful years, she turned away from Rome. She told of conditions there which she felt threatened the moral integrity of her sons. "I could be a good Christian," she said, "in the Roman Catholic Church, but I think of my boys." She, with her husband, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church. She felt God had sent them there in answer to prayer, and she said so repeatedly in public testimony. Through his own word the Holy Spirit had reached the innermost life of this devoted mother, and she was obediently responsive to the heavenly Father's call. The devotion of the husband was, evidently, as real as that of the wife. Subsequently two sons and two daughters were received into church fellowship, and a new baby was baptized by the Protestant clergyman.

A single additional instance, one which has been a great personal inspiration. It would seem that it should convince men anew of the activity and the potency of God's Spirit. The place is a large Long Island village, a suburb of New York city. An intelligent man, slightly lame, stepped into the church and took the seat nearest the door. It was a Sunday evening. He was gone before the minister could reach him. He continued to attend the evening service; then came to the morning worship as well. One day he stopped long enough to invite the minister to call. He lived alone in a house near the church. His mother had died about a year before. That mother was a beautiful Christian, a member of that church. She had long been a patient sufferer with rheumatism. This son, fifty-five years of age, was a persistent infidel. He believed his mother had a comfort in her religion; still he insisted that her

religion was a delusion. Before her death he had been her faithful nurse. After her departure he had remained in the home, his own health being impaired. He had come to church, he said, as a matter of pastime and to satisfy his curiosity. He had never been a deeply depraved man, but had used alcoholic stimulants more or less, and in a moderate way had been "one of the boys" in other days. To use his own phraseology, "You hit me in the neck the very first night. I went home angry, hunted up a Bible, and found to my surprise that what you said was there, and more like it." He said that he was "hit" every time he came to the services. Religion began to assume the form of reality. He felt his own need of God's help. He read the Bible. He prayed. He gained relief, but he could hardly believe it lasting. He put himself on probation, deciding that if God would help him to lead a Christian life for a

term of months, he would confess him and present himself as a candidate for church membership. He adhered strictly to his self-prescribed program, attending all the services possible, including prayer meeting and class meeting. It was his delight to converse with the brethren on religious subjects. His religious life grew brighter and brighter, though the rheumatism fastened itself with constantly increasing tenacity upon him, and he could leave the house only with great effort. A brother-in-law, a sincere Christian, who knew his life from young manhood, called at the parsonage to express appreciation of the great change which had been wrought in the life of an infidel. "It's a wonderful change," he said. And it was—a complete transformation. The suffering rheumatic, rejoicing in peace of soul, lives in that brother-in-law's home in the State of Connecticut. Here is a sentence from a recent letter: "I can assure you that

my faith in the Master is just as strong as ever, and I pray daily that it may become stronger and firmer." He is rarely able to attend the sanctuary now, but evidently is growing in grace.

God lives! God works in the hearts of men! God saves! He is not confined by seasons or localities. Some are reached in revival times, others under ordinary circumstances of worship within the church or elsewhere. The Holy Spirit is abroad pleading with men. When the plea is heeded transgression is forgiven, iniquity is covered; where evil was the good abounds. These are working principles. All Christians should recognize them and permit themselves to be channels for the Holy Spirit. We should be convinced that none are too bad; that, if given a chance, the grace of God has such potency that the most depraved and debauched can be saved, "saved to the uttermost."

CHAPTER II

THE PERSONAL TOUCH

THE principles which have been enunciated and illustrated in the preceding chapter are fundamental. The Spirit of God does strive with men, and men may heed the Spirit and find God, doubtless without other agency.

Nevertheless, it is evident as a principle of the divine procedure that the efficiency of the Holy Spirit as a regenerating agent is increased as saved sinners become workers together with God. This is the divine method as presented in the Bible. In Christ Jesus the divine and the human were united to bring salvation. Though Christ is no longer present in the flesh, the same union of powers is most largely successful in winning souls. Men with burning hearts because of the Holy Spirit's presence are to touch other hearts and thus effect a vital

union with Jesus Christ. This experience is common to soul-winners everywhere. Peter and his companions felt it at Pentecost. Spiritual history has been repeating it ever since. Clearly, then, this mighty truth has not been hidden. It is no secret to be possessed and used by an elect few. It is an open sesame for every Christian into a field of untold achievement. "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa and Samaria, and to the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1. 8). The resurrected Christ was not mistaken. His last words, spoken just before "he was taken up," deserve our most reverent attention. They should flood the Christian with a sense of obligation. They should impel him to holy achievement.

As a matter of fact, it would appear that the majority of Christians have no such sense of personal respon-

sibility. Certainly, there is no widespread cry, "‘Woe is me’ if I win not souls." On the other hand, there is an apparent incredulity as to competency, resulting in an utter indifference with many if not most Christians. This incredulity and indifference, if questioned, are excused on the ground that such work is that to which the minister is ordained and for which ministers are equipped both by school training and practical experience. Soul-winning is an essential part of his vocation and the minister ought to achieve such results. Granted! That, however, does not relieve any other Christian to whom opportunities may come, especially since there are thousands—yea, millions—whom the ministers can never reach because of obvious and natural limitations, however willing their disposition. That opportunities do come to or may be found by most Christians is a sufficient indication of duty.

Yet truly, for this work above all others, there must be equipment for laymen as well as ministers. That equipment is attainable. Such attainment may be followed by achievement. Certainly, achievement is unlikely, if not impossible, without the prescribed equipment, followed by earnest effort. The trained athlete knows that often the most surprising feat is performed, by supreme effort, when achievement seems impossible. The capable athlete succeeds because he tries—dares venture even though he fail. Herein is the secret of success for the Christian, commissioned to win souls—as every Christian is: Fitness added to Effort Produces Success.

Surely, it is the unescapable duty of every Christian to be efficient as a soul-winner to the extent of his talents. Such efficiency requires the worker to be a Christian indeed. This means personal union with Jesus Christ—prayer union, contact through his

Word, and union with him by the indwelling of his Spirit—the vital relation of the vine to the branches. This union insures agreement with the Saviour in motive and activity. There will be personal contact with men, coupled with willingness to follow the divine leadings and courage to seize opportunities in simple faith and humble dependence on God. Having this equipment, practically any Christian who has the faculty of interesting others in anything—lessons to be learned, goods to be bought, club or lodge to be joined, candidate to be voted for, literature, music, art, social chat, sport—has essential qualities for individual work for Christ. There may or may not be impelling inherited traditions, a natural personal disposition, long and intimate association with men, thorough education, and wide reading. Any or all of these may be helpful; all are desirable; but none of them are essential as an equipment for the

winner of souls. The *sine qua non* of the evangelist, whether minister or layman, as to fitness, is union with Christ and contact with men, linked to a determination to acquaint the sinner personally with the Saviour. Whatever else he has or has not, this must be the possession of the soul-winner.

Yet fitness without endeavor, like knowledge and faith without love, is nothing. All the power of Jesus would not have saved the Samaritan woman without Christ's effort. What pains he took! How discreetly he directed that conversation! How tactful he was! How winsome! How prodigal in revealing truth to a congregation of one! And such a one! He wrought manfully, divinely, for that soul, and he won. Assuredly, then, it is the unmistakable obligation of every Christian to strive to win others for Christ, according to his ability. Opportunities, as a rule, need not be sought. They press upon us. Family ties and bus-

iness, educational, social, political, fraternal, and every other relationship in life, bring frequent opportunities for Christian effort. Negligence means peril and disaster, not only to the sinner, but to the Christian as well. He must answer for his sins of omission. To-day many persons—multitudes—are unconverted and unsaved because the ministry of soul-winning is made the endeavor of the few rather than the active employment of all Christians. The British Weekly tells a story of General William Booth, of the Salvation Army. He had responded to a request for an interview with Queen Alexandra. The interview ended, the Princess Victoria requested him to write in her autograph album. For a moment he was at a loss as to what to write. A quick thought solved his problem. He took pen and wrote, "Saved to save," and signed his name. A short time thereafter a messenger came from Queen Alexandra, bearing

her autograph album and requesting the General to inscribe therein the same sentiment he had written for the Princess Victoria. Of course he acceded to the request, and wrote for the good queen that which well may be the ideal and the purpose of every Christian of high and low degree, "Saved to save."

Of course every effort will not be successful in apparent result. The athlete has failures. The business investment does not always pay dividends. Students have been known to fail in examinations. It is admitted that there may be great disappointments as well as certain successes. Yet every opportunity, whether of minister or layman, in public or private, is to be recognized as a solemn call to effort promising glorious results. Invariably that call should be accepted. Whether success is apparent or not, it is real as God reckons and as eternity will show, when sincere effort has been

made. The great sadness is that so many Christians make no attempt to win men. Even the opportunities which confront them unsought are ignored. The evident results often are startling when honest efforts are made. Why should they not be remarkable? The Christian does not work alone. God is his confederate. It is a holy alliance, in which human limitations are swept away and the impossible is transformed into the possible. To illustrate:

A young man passing a one-armed newsboy on the street handed him a card invitation to a Young Men's Christian Association meeting. It was the only card he had the grace and courage to offer that day. The newsboy attended that meeting and was converted—a soul was saved from death. How slight an effort for God may have a great result! Consider another case: A man of twenty-seven years pulled the parsonage doorbell

one fall evening. He inquired for the pastor. His greeting was an apology. He was not sober. The pastor had visited the young man's father some time before. As the son had passed through the hall and up the stairs he had caught fragments of the conversation. Subsequently, weary of his bondage, having tried to reform over and over again, as a last desperate venture, he sought the counsel of a man whose voice he had heard, whom he trusted because of his "high calling," but whom he had never seen. He signed the pledge. He was advised urgently to take a more radical step, but he lacked the courage that night. After three weeks he was trapped into drinking. Again he sought the minister and confessed his fault, ashamed that he had broken faith. That night he took the more decided action on his knees—the first prayer in eight years. He kept "straight" and happy for months. A peculiar

combination of circumstances to which he should have been superior led to his fall. Yet recent reports indicate that after about ten years he is living a sober and honorable life. This opportunity sought the minister, was forced upon him. He might have felt the case hopeless and dismissed his caller, whose condition was abject. He did what he could. The result—a miracle of grace. Of course God was in it. One more case: A Scotchman called on a minister to plan for the funeral services of his babe. The minister spoke to him, as anyone might, of his religious life. He had “lost his evidences.” He was not “good enough” to receive the holy communion. After the funeral the minister called at the home, as was his custom. He met the wife and mother bereaved. How tender she was! Almost the first sentence about personal faith in the heavenly Father to whom her child had gone brought

tears. She rededicated herself to Christ then and there. She had been yearning for Christian fellowship. That evening in the revival service she made a public confession of Christ. Several months thereafter—it was Watch Night—her husband was present. The canny Scot had been wary, had avoided the church. But he had not escaped the strivings of the Divine Spirit. He found his “evidences” that New Year’s morning. How faithful he became! A daughter—a schoolgirl—was converted soon afterward. Other conversions, including friends and neighbors, were brought about through their efforts. Evidently, affliction and sorrow afford immediate opportunity for Christian sympathy and triumph. Wise is he who thus wins a soul. He hides a multitude of sins.

Truly, every soul-winner should despise discouragement and scorn difficulty. No case is too obstinate. No man has a right to decide that any

are hopeless. Make the effort! Repeat it, if necessary. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again." The result may be a Peter, a Bunyan, a Moody. Such Christian conquerors are the demand of the hour. But first we need the Andrews to lead them to Christ.

The great revival will arrive when the work of the ministry, faithfully performed in pulpit and pastoral labors, is reenforced by the hearty service of hosts of real Christians in individual effort for souls. George Macdonald relates the story of a boy, gazing at a glorious sunset, who thought he would like to be a painter, "Because then," he said, "I could help God to paint the sky" (*Annals of a Quiet Neighborhood*, page 15). Recalling such evidences as the age affords of the divine power in transforming human lives from vicious ugliness to holy beauty, shall not we too have aspirations? O that we might be

soul-winners, and thus help God to banish the desert and bring paradise to earth!

Away with incredulity! Expel indifference as to the need and duty of individual work for souls! Thus we shall remove a serious barrier to the salvation of men. Speed the day, Lord Jesus!

CHAPTER III

THE TEXTBOOK

WE have learned heretofore that men are unable to touch their fellows with that power which brings decision for Christ unless they themselves are Spirit-filled. Given this God-posessed life, then the consecrated effort is usually rewarded. There are two great instrumentalities without which life is unlikely to be Spirit-filled. One instrumentality is the Holy Bible. The Bible must be employed by the winner of souls. No one can use the Bible intelligently and effectively without specific knowledge of its contents. Through the Bible-searching Christian God brings his adequate, personal message to mankind. There is no doubt as to the adequacy of the Bible message. As Dr. Charles E. Jefferson said so strikingly in his Yale Lectures, "Many men have many minds and

many needs and many tastes, and the Bible is a myriad-sided book for a myriad-sided humanity" (The Building of the Church, p. 258). The Christian, then, being associated with men, whom he ought to influence and win for God, must search the Scriptures, that he may gain such a mastery of this myriad-sided book as will enable him to apply its balm to the wounds of a myriad-sided humanity.

I. THE EVANGEL AND THE EVANGELIST

Our Scriptures include the gospel. The gospel is the evangel, and the evangel is the good news. It is a universal message. There is no superman in respect to the Scriptures. Real human superiority is most likely to be a gospel product. There is no degradation beyond the reach of gospel help. Where decadence persists and sin riots, there the evangel is despised. The good news is to be found in

the Old Testament as well as in the New. The major note in both is "redemption." Incidentally, redemption is related to every human interest. Primarily and paramountly it is concerned with the moral and spiritual welfare of mankind, and its unit is the individual. Divine relationships, as well as human, are described in the Book with a lucidity, a heart-searching sympathy, and an authority nowhere else apparent. Here is essential truth. "Search the Scriptures" and you will find fundamental principles which are eternal. As the problems of mathematics cannot be solved without the fundamental operations, so the problems of life require for their solution a working knowledge of Bible fundamentals. He who has such practical knowledge and uses it is an evangelist.

But evangelists are few. They should be many. Literally, every Christian should be an evangelist, a herald of

the evangel, one who tells the good news of salvation. But the story is not being heralded as it ought to be. Why? Is it because we know not the evangel? Or, knowing it, do we treat it lightly, indifferently, or even contemptuously, as did so many of the contemporaries of Jesus? Be sure there can be no evangelist without the evangel. Here, doubtless, is the revelation of failure. The Bible is accessible. The Book is open. But the Scriptures are not being *sought*. The treasures of Holy Writ have not been found, appropriated as a personal possession, and hid in our hearts, that they may become a leaven leavening the whole lump of humanity.

II. THE EVANGEL EQUIPS THE EVANGELIST

Notwithstanding our un-Christian delinquency, we cannot but observe the mighty and salutary influence of the Bible upon the world. Our na-

tional leaders of to-day are men of strength. Whence has come their power? Is it not a reassuring fact that the most positive and influential of these men are pronounced and practical Christians? They have demonstrated their familiarity with the Bible and their loyalty to the great Book. As long ago as 1901, the Hon. Theodore Roosevelt, then Vice-President of the United States, delivered an address at Oyster Bay, at the Eighty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Long Island Bible Society, of which he is one of the vice-presidents. That address treated of the Bible as related to character. He argued that "the Bible is not only essential to Christianity, but essential to good citizenship"; that "every thinking man, when he thinks, realizes what a very large number of people tend to forget that the teachings of the Bible are so interwoven and entwined with our whole civic and social life that it

would be literally—I do not mean figuratively, I mean literally—impossible for us to figure to ourselves what that life would be if these teachings were removed.” The address closed thus: “We plead for a closer and wider and deeper study of the Bible, so that our people may be in fact as well as in theory ‘doers of the word, and not hearers only’ ” (President Roosevelt On The Bible. American Bible Society Leaflet). More recently, on the occasion of the Tercentenary Celebration of the King James’ Version of the Bible, in Orchestra Hall, Chicago, Illinois, May 4, 1911, the Hon. William J. Bryan delivered a remarkable address on “The Book of Supreme Influence.” In that address Mr. Bryan said, “Wherever the moral standard is being lifted up—wherever life is becoming larger in the vision that directs it and richer in its fruitage, the improvement is traceable to the Bible and to the influence of the

God and Christ of whom the Bible tells" (Hon. William J. Bryan On The Bible. American Bible Society Leaflet). At about the same time, celebrating the same event, at Denver, Colorado, he who is now President of the United States, the Hon. Woodrow Wilson, declared the Bible to be the charter of human progress. Mr. Wilson said that the Bible "reveals every man to himself as a distinct moral agent, responsible not to men, . . . but responsible through his own conscience to his Lord and Maker. Whenever a man sees this vision he stands up a free man." Again: "A man has found himself when he has found his relation to the rest of the universe, and here is the book in which those relations are set forth." Further: "And the Bible is without age or date or time. It is a picture of the human heart displayed for all ages and for all sorts and conditions of men." "Nothing makes America great except

her thoughts, except her ideals, except her acceptance of those standards of judgment which are written largely upon the pages of revelation." Here are the closing words of the address: "I have a very simple thing to ask of you. I ask of every man and woman in this audience that from this night on they will realize that part of the destiny of America lies in their daily perusal of this great book of revelations—that if they would see America free and pure, they will make their own spirits free and pure by this baptism of the Holy Scripture" (Governor Woodrow Wilson On The Bible. American Bible Society Leaflet). Do not such testimony and admonition convince us that the Bible provides highly desirable equipment for men? Is it not clear that the Bible must be taken seriously? More seriously than the pocketbook, or the bankbook, or any other book whatsoever?

Certain it is that the serious searcher

within the Book finds there a personal commission. That great commission is for every Christian. Our Saviour says, "Go *ye* into all the world" (Mark 16. 15). His farewell assurance, "*Ye* shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1. 8, R. V.) includes every disciple. Whatever our vocation or social standing or religious relationships, we are to make the gospel known; we are to be witnesses of Jesus Christ at home and abroad. This is a task to which every Christian is ordained by the will of God and the personal command of Christ. And the great commission has been its own vindication. Whenever and wherever men have felt and acted upon it as a personal obligation, life has been revitalized in individuals, communities, and states. Gospel truth in human life and in society is a powerful constructive agency. Its absence is an assurance of deterioration. George Macdonald is right when he quotes a devout German who

says that "Where God rules not, demons will" (Annals, p. 322).

Obviously enough, however, no one can preach the gospel without knowing it. No soul can bear witness unless he has seen and felt for himself. Where shall we go that we may see, and who shall teach us that we may know? We must "search the Scriptures." This is a complete answer. The Bible is our Mount of Vision. Its supreme personality is our Teacher. In his Word there is eternal life for every soul (John 5. 24). The Book introduces us to the Teacher and clears the atmosphere so that we may see the vision—which many of his countrymen did not see, as his own statement indicates (John 5. 40). But he who heeds the Teacher and learns the lesson sees the vision and performs the task. His achievements prove the power of the gospel.

The secret of that power is not far to seek. The Bible teachings go to

the very heart of things. The Bible breathes forth sympathy as a violet spreads fragrance. It extends strong arms of comfort as gracious as a mother's love. It puts a foundation under the feet: "On Christ the Solid Rock I stand." It does impart power and give life—eternal life. But it does more. It condemns! It robs sin of its bewitching beauty. It pictures the foul thing in all its awful, black colors and hideous forms. In sin's train stalks sorrow and tragedy—not joy and delights. Beyond that is the bitter, choking sob, the pall, the grave—then hell, deep, dark, abiding. In the Bible, sin is absolutely AWFUL. Thus negatively, as well as positively, the Bible is the most constant and positive preacher of righteousness. It never flatters; nor does it compromise. "God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (Gen. 3. 3). No compromise there! To David the king, Nathan—

God's man—with indicting index finger, declared, "Thou art the man" (2 Sam. 12. 7). Belshazzar was proud. Belshazzar was a mighty monarch. Nevertheless, the finger of the Almighty, when a thousand lords were Belshazzar's guests, inscribed on the wall of the banquet hall, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting" (Dan. 5. 27). The young man of high moral character was frankly told by Jesus, "One thing thou lackest" (Mark 10. 21). That was [a concrete illustration of the eternal truth, "No man can serve two masters. . . . Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matt. 6. 24). The rich gormand, having died, is in torments, while Lazarus, the faithful, though a beggar and a noisome invalid, finds a refuge in Abraham's bosom. And the way of salvation is not many; there is no alternative route, "for there is none other name under heaven given among men,

whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4. 12). Then, almost on the last page of the great Book, we read, "And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Rev. 21. 27). No flattery! No compromise! Yet the Bible is as gentle as a lovely child and as tender as a wooing lover. How beautiful is the book of Ruth! How winsome are the Saviour's words!—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11. 28-31).

Rightly do we infer as we thus read that God puts a high value on a human soul. The soul is infinitely valuable. We are ever confronted by

the challenging interrogative of Jesus, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark 8. 36, 37.) The total of all earthly treasure is too little to offer in exchange for the poorest, meanest human soul. It took the eternal life and the infinite love of God's Son to ransom accursed humanity. Heaven was compelled to make the unique and superlative investment that the penalty of sin might be paid. So great is the value of a soul, God himself being the assessor!

It is also apparent to the Scripture-searcher that the Bible proclaims the purpose and the power of Christ to save souls. Repeated invitations and many assurances make it certain that he is willing and able to save men. "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1. 29). "I came that they may

have life, and may have it abundantly" (John 10. 10). "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20. 28). "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14. 6). "For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by his life" (Rom. 5. 10). These, and many other like expressions, proclaim the glorious truth. They are conclusive. He is willing! He is able!

This, then, is the prospect from our Mount of Vision: The beauty of holiness, the awfulness of sin, the worth of a soul, and the purpose and power of God through Jesus Christ to save men. The Teacher confirms the vision and directs us to our task. The Christian must be a witness. The earnest searcher gains a sense of

personal responsibility which entails individual accountability. He is his brother's keeper, and he knows it. He must be alert, with lamps trimmed and oil provided. He must invest his talent and gain other talents. His neighbor may be near or far, and he must be neighborly. The far country never can be his satisfying home; he must arise and go to his Father. Sowing and reaping are definitely related; men may think they deny it, but God is not mocked. The cross is dreaded, derided, it may be; but it is the highway to the crown. Tribulation is sure—heart-crushing sorrow, heavily weighted burdens, humiliating adversity. But there's something else—an antidote! Smiles for tears! Sunshine for storms! "Be of good cheer," says Jesus, "for I'm the Conqueror." His victory is mine. He lives now! So do I! So shall I—if he is allowed to live in me. I am a trustee of an invaluable treasure—my soul, my life.

A superabundance of possessions, things, cannot redeem my soul, any soul. Beside a soul they are paltry tinsel. My treasure is forfeit! Sin, the cause! It is redeemed! Alleluia! Christ is the ransom! How do I know? The redeemed of whom the Book tells say so. Peter and James and John; the Magdalene and the Samaritan woman; Zacchæus and the blind man; the Ethiopian prime minister and Saul of Tarsus, who became the great ambassador of Jesus Christ, and a host of others—they all tell the story of a full salvation.

I know the power of the Book's truth is not exhausted. Not one jot or tittle is to pass away. My mother tested the truth. It did not fail her. She lived in the light of that truth—a tried and triumphant soul. That truth grips me. I have seen it sway and conquer men. It never fails when applied to an earnest life. Its invitation ever rings out, "O taste and see

that the Lord is good. Blessed is the man that trusteth in him" (Psa. 34. 8). And the epitome of the task is in the Rule called Golden and the Law which is Royal (Matt. 22. 37-40). Test them! Out of a loving heart bear witness. Then comes the song beginning, "I love to tell the story of unseen things above." The sincere soul must act. He becomes a walking and talking evangel. He is effective, other things being equal, in proportion as he is mastered by the wonderful teachings of the Book. The field in which he labors is not limited. His genius, his talent, and his opportunity are given the fullest scope. It may be in the home, or in the Sunday school, or in the pulpit, or in the mission field. The soul of John Wesley was so flooded by the gospel truth that he looked upon the world as his parish. And though his dust rests in the cemetery adjoining City Road Chapel, London, even to-day the spirit

of the man has so inspired men that his is a world-wide parish in which "he being dead yet speaketh."

III. HAVING THE EVANGEL, THE EVANGELIST WINS MEN

Somewhere there is the story of one of the first converts to Christianity in Japan. It testifies of the power of the gospel, brought to the attention of a young Japanese by an American lady. This lady was associated with several missionaries who were engaged in translating the Scriptures. The lady offered to teach English to the young man and gave him the Gospel of John to translate. Soon thereafter he became greatly agitated and restless. At last he could contain himself no longer, and burst out with the question: "Who is this man about whom I am reading—the Jesus? You call him a man, but he must be a God." Thus the written Word proved itself "quick and powerful" (Heb. 4. 12), and was the

means of saving a soul (The Illustrator). Miss Belle M. Brain, writing in the Missionary Review of the World concerning William Duncan, apostle to the full-blooded Tsimshian Indians, of Annette Island, Alaska, relates a wonderful tale of human accomplishment with the Bible as guidebook. On Annette Island is a village where "nobody gets drunk, everybody goes to church, no one smokes save an occasional tourist, no work of any kind is ever done on the Sabbath, God's name is never taken in vain, and there has never been any bloodshed"—all of which refers to conditions under present auspices. It was not ever thus. The picture of conditions as William Duncan found them a half century back is black enough. "The cruelty and degradation of the Indians beggar description. Their natural fiendishness was augmented by the white man's rum, and they were a terror then along the coast, both to red man and

white. Not long after his arrival Mr. Duncan witnessed a sight from one of the bastions of the fort that revealed the awful depths into which these people had fallen. A chief having murdered a slave woman in honor of his young daughter, two bands of hideously painted savages dragged the body to the water's edge, tore it limb from limb and apparently devoured the flesh. Maddened by rum and wrought by a pitch of hysterical frenzy, they continued their fiendish orgies day and night for some time." In 1909, when asked to account for the transformation, Father Duncan replied: "The only power there is in the world to change the heart of man is found in the Bible. The gospel has done its work. You can teach the Indian in a great many ways—teach him to be this and that and teach him to work, and then fail if you discard the gospel" (See Tarbell's Teachers' Guide, 1911, p. 212). When a

young man I heard a story of Bible power told by a beloved pastor. His father was a minister of the gospel. There was a son of that home, a young man who seemed proof against the gospel appeal. He was ill, sick unto death, as I recall it. His friends were deeply concerned, but no counsel or advices seemed potent for help to the groping soul. A Bible was left on a stand by the bedside. One day when alone the young man opened the book; he read from the Psalms. His eye fell upon the words, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Psa. 34. 6). A sun of brightness arose in his soul. Help arrived. The Book was potent. The invalid rested in peace.

In my young manhood a profound impression was made upon my religious life by a great revival campaign in the church of which I was a member. The evangelist was faithful in his presentation of truth, but I do not

remember the details of any one sermon. As though it were yesterday, however, do I recall how, as he pressed the invitation, with open Bible in hand, the printed page held up toward the congregation, he pointed to and read the words, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3. 23). Then he would turn quickly to John 1. 29, his finger following the words of the text, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Finally, words of Jesus in Matt. 11. 28, already quoted, were permitted to make their appeal, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." That was the A B C of salvation. Hundreds responded to the invitations which were given. It is true! It is true! God's word does not return unto him void. The Spirit-filled man and the Spirit-inspired Book are a conquering combination.

In these days we are coming to

think more than ever of Christianity as a great democracy—a religion which not only transforms the individual, but which, beginning with individuals and including all individuals, works marvelous transformations of righteousness in communities and states. Its only limitation is the whole human race. Its program is the reconstruction of human society everywhere. But Christianity, as an imperial democracy, will not arrive until the mighty and vital truths of God's Book have been absorbed and have become an essential part of all human activities. That is more nearly true now than it ever has been. We can hasten the coming of God's great day by the personal mastery and enthronement of Bible truth, and by appealing persuasively to our fellows to do the same. He who knows the evangel understands that this is not optional, but that it is the high privilege and solemn duty of every Christian to be a witness for Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER IV

THE KEYNOTE

HITHERTO we have observed the potency of the Holy Bible as an instrumentality through which the Holy Spirit comes into human lives, equipping men to win their fellows for God. The Spirit-filled life is induced also by the practice of prayer. Prayer is an instrument essential for the use of Christians in bringing God's kingdom to men. This we assume, having in our thought the precise instruction of Jesus Christ. The disciples one day saw the private devotions of our Lord. Previously, doubtless, they had noticed the influence of prayer in his life. They were impressed with the value of prayer for him, and in possibility, for themselves. "When he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them,

When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come" (Luke 11. 1, 2). "Thy kingdom come." All the petitions of this Pattern Prayer are fundamental. At this point, then, our Great Teacher touches the Keynote for Christian conquest.

I. THE KINGDOM AND PRAYER

There should be no confusion as to the kingdom. I understand this kingdom to be the kingdom of God, the kingdom of righteousness, the kingdom of love and goodness in men's lives, the kingdom which will be realized on earth when God's will is done here as it is in heaven. When this prayer is answered it will be because men have followed Jesus Christ, have trusted and obeyed him, with glowing tongue and burning deed have certified to their fidelity. In some degree this has been realized in every age of the Christian era. The very existence of the apos-

tolie church is to be accounted for by a profound belief in the kingdom of God. The power which brought Christians together in groups and built them into church organizations at the beginning was what has been called an impassioned confidence in the reality and immanence of that divine order. And prayer was the heart and soul of their union. We cannot forget that Pentecostal blessing, empowering the disciples for soul-winning endeavor, followed a prayer service extending over ten days and was characterized by an intensity which we should try to appreciate and realize for ourselves. Think of the occasion! The Lord had left them. Previous to his departure he had told them of his intention; they were depressed thereby; he informed them of the expediency of the separation, but assured them that they would not be deserted or neglected. They would have another Comforter who would be a teacher, helper, and guide.

Afterward he declared, "And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28. 20). "And a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts 1. 9). His promises, assurances, and the great commission were seed which took root in their hearts to produce a great expectation. Would the promises be fulfilled, the assurances honored? It was a crisis. They met and remained together for prayer. Faith and fortune and destiny were grounded upon the issue in which prayer played so large a part. And faith and prayer were vindicated. Prayer was the key to the dynamic. After the waiting in prayer for a day, and a week—yes, for ten days—the answer came. It was a flood tide of blessing and power. The Holy Spirit filled them. Vision and eloquence, logic and action followed in his train. The accession to the kingdom that day in Jerusalem was three thousand souls. Soon thereafter we read that "many

of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand" (Acts 4. 4).

Such prevailing prayer, then and now, is related very directly and definitely to a state of mind. With this state of mind comes the sense of personal need, a realization of new found values, a spirit of submission and a determination to use the instrument prayer. Were we to seek that state of mind in geography and literature and biography, we would travel in imagination to Palestine, open our Bibles, and study the life of Jesus in the Gospels, recalling the directing admonition of Saint Paul to the Philippians, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 2. 5). Jesus was a man of prayer, of prevailing prayer. It was essential to his well-being and ours that he should develop and maintain his powers by communion with God. Prayer was nourishment to his soul, and power to

his purpose; it opened the door to infinite resources. Men are lean of soul, poor of purpose, limited in resource, and void of fruitage, because they rely upon mere worldly counsel and help for guidance. Jacob was at the point of absolute failure in spite of great keenness and shrewdness of earthly wisdom. He faced his crisis knowing that he had exhausted his resources. He must find help. He reaches after God. Jacob prays! Jacob becomes a prince of God—Israel! Aspiring souls will travel with Jacob and Jesus to the place of prayer. The same truth applies to the Christian who would be distinguished as a soul-winner—a builder of the kingdom. Tennyson says:

More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of.

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For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by chains about the feet of God.

There is evidence that the church has lost the keynote of power at times, with the result that the kingdom has suffered. Christians have not been at harmony among themselves. In our own experience, what we call Christian work has occupied our powers so largely, or matters foreign to the kingdom have crowded in and monopolized our time and energies so fully, that we have had little time or thought for prayer. And Zion knew no peace within her walls and little of prosperity within her palaces. The corrective is not far to seek. Our rallying cry is: "Back to the Christ—the praying Christ!" He teaches us to pray, "Our Father, . . . Thy kingdom come."

II. PRAYER—A MIGHTY FORCE

Prayer is a force to be used in relation to all human interests. The medical faculty acknowledge the value of prayer in connection with the heal-

ing art. Science, too, attests its worth. Sir Oliver Lodge in his book *Science and Immortality* argues as a scientist at considerable length for the validity of prayer. "If we have any instinct for worship," he says, "for prayer, for communion with saints, or with Deity, let us trust that instinct, for there lies the realm of true religion" (p. 44). "It may be that prayer is an instrument which can control or influence higher agencies, and by its neglect we may be losing the use of a mighty engine to help on our lives and those of others" (p. 46). Precisely so, as has been demonstrated by practical Christianity. It is highly probable that prayer had the chief place in the earliest forms of Christian worship and service. Then, too, in the face of sternest opposition, there was conquest. There were mighty men in the kingdom in those early days—conquerors. Of some of them we read, "And when they had prayed, the

place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4. 31). The statesmen of the kingdom ever have been wielders of this powerful weapon. We are reminded that back of the Reformation of the sixteenth century was the caloused knees of Philip Melancthon and the "To have prayed well is to have studied well" of Martin Luther. Luther has been esteemed a thunderer. There was power back of his thunderings. It is said of him that when the battle of the Reformation was hottest and he was, therefore, busiest, he felt that he could not afford to spend less than four hours a day in prayer. No wonder he was a thunderer—spake the word of God with boldness. When his heart was fired with prayer, he seized on great words, fabricated them into flashing sentences, which he hurled like bombs into the

midst of his opponents, to their consternation and ultimate defeat. Without the prayer life the bolts of the thunderer would have been of no effect.

Referring to the Journal of John Wesley, Augustine Birrell writes that it is the most amazing record of human exertion ever penned or endured. He describes Wesley as the greatest force of the eighteenth century in England. "No single figure influenced so many minds, no single voice touched so many hearts. No other man did such a life's work for England" (Miscellanies). The lifework of Wesley saved England socially and politically, as also in respect to religion. Truly, he was a statesman of the kingdom of God. We are not surprised to learn that he always wrote on the first page of his diaries, "I resolve, *Deo juvante*—1. To devote (to retirement and private prayer,) an hour morning and evening—no pretense or excuse whatsoever" (The Life of John

Wesley, by Telford, p. 263). Doubtless he too spake the word of God with boldness, and with a far-reaching effect which has made him the world's great evangelist, because he possessed and did not lose the keynote of power—prayer. George Whitefield, Wesley's co-laborer, who so moved the hearts of men in England and America by his mighty appeals, had an unvarying rule of one hour alone with God before preaching.

Francis Asbury, the greatest constructive force in American Christianity, "habitually arose at from four to five o'clock in the morning, and gave from three to four hours to prayer and study, and also as constantly, before retiring for the night, gave himself at least one hour to like pursuits" (Francis Asbury, by George P. Mains, p. 107). "He seemed well-nigh literally to fulfill the precept of Saint Paul to 'pray without ceasing.' He was a true brother of Baxter, who 'stained

his study walls with the very breath of prayer' ” (Ibid., p. 107). “Freeborn Garrettson said of him, ‘He prayed the best, and prayed the most, of any man I ever knew’ ” (Ibid., p. 109). In spite of difficulties almost insuperable in the field, and of physical frailty which would have been prostrating to most men, this man exalted the office of a bishop by labors almost unthinkable, ever exercising this power of prayer. “Some measure of his achievements may be indicated by comparing the numerical status of the denomination at the beginning and at the close of his episcopal career. When at thirty-nine years of age he was ordained bishop the denomination comprised but eighty preachers and less than 15,000 members. When in his seventy-first year he dropped his mantle he was the acknowledged and venerated leader of more than 211,000 Methodists and more than 700 preachers” (Ibid., p. 125). Yes, this Christian

statesman prayed; evidently, he too was filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word of God with convincing boldness.

Some years ago, when Mr. George Muller visited America, he was asked how long he had ever prayed continuously for any object. "Taking a little book from his pocket, he said: 'When I was converted I was a wild boy in college. My conversion broke friendship between my roommate and myself, for he "would have nothing to do with such a fanatic," he said. I wrote his name in this book and promised God that I would pray for him each day until he was converted, or until I died. I prayed five years with no apparent result. Ten years went by with no change. I continued on for fifteen years—twenty years, and still he was an unbeliever. I did not yet give him up, but prayed twenty-five years, each day mentioning his name at the throne of grace, and

then came a letter, saying, "I have found the Saviour." Then,' said Mr. Muller, 'I checked out this petition as answered. In this same book I have other names that I have prayed for five, ten, and fifteen years, and scores of names against which there is a cross, showing that the requests have been granted.'

"Here, then, was a man who made a business of prayer, and who kept his accounts with the Lord in a businesslike way. When he had a matter to present to God's attention, he first found a promise on which to base his appeal, always making sure, if possible, that it was according to God's will. Then he recorded his petition in a book and watched and waited for the answer. Is it any wonder that this man's faith grew rapidly, and that he became the most notable and, possibly, the most successful pray-er of modern times?" (What Every Christian Needs to Know, by Howard W.

Pope, pp. 194, 195.) Muller founded and supported great orphanages in Bristol, England, never making a public appeal for funds, but always laying the needs of the cause before God in prayer. He never lacked. His work extended over more than half a century. He has been called a millionaire by faith. As we have seen, his practice of prayer extended to direct soul-winning activities as well.

It is probable, however, that there will be even greater inspiration for the multitude in the fact that lowly folk have found power in prayer. Dr. W. J. Dawson, in his stirring little volume, *The Forgotten Secret*, reminds us that "The greatest revival in our generation, in the course of which 80,000 have publicly confessed Christ, has found its sole dynamic in prayer. There has been little preaching, neither elaborate music nor eloquent appeals, and no organization of effort, but there has been abundant praying. In one

instance known to me, a simple farmer and his wife unlocked the door of a humble chapel on a lonely hillside, and themselves began to pray for their neighbors by name, until in one fortnight, drawn by an invisible compulsion, more than fifty persons so prayed for came to this unadvertised meeting, and yielded themselves to Christ. And this story is typical of the whole Welsh revival, which may be justly described as a rediscovery of the dynamic efficacy of prayer. So, then, the secret is not only open but thoroughly attested. Nothing proved by science is more plainly verified than that prayer is the supreme dynamic of the church. Is not the deduction obvious, that when the church returns to the practice of prayer, as the supreme expression of its life, it will at once rediscover the secret of conquest, which is often conspicuously absent in the best organized revival?" (The Forgotten Secret, pp. 51, 52.)

Dr. Chapman tells of a gentleman whom he knew for years. He was one of seven sons. All but one were Christians. That one had well-nigh broken his mother's heart. She "was wearying for him, as the Scotch people say. One of her old neighbors came in and said, 'Mrs. M——, why don't you give John up? You have six boys for Christ; rejoice in them and let him go.' 'My old mother,' said my friend, 'rose to her feet, and taking hold of the chair for support, said: 'I will never give him up. I gave him to God before he was born. I carried him to the church as soon as I could walk and placed him upon the altar; he is God's child and he will have him if he turns the world over to get him.' 'And she lived long enough,' said my friend, 'to see her boy a Christian, a judge in one of the highest courts in America, and an officer in the church'" (Present-Day Evangelism, by J. Wilbur Chapman,

pp. 142, 143). Thank God that so many mothers know the power of prayer!

Bishop Nuelsen, writing from Bulgaria during the recent war, says: "Over yonder in Ruschuk a good Methodist woman prayed earnestly for her unconverted husband in the field and was joined in her petition by the whole congregation. Some weeks later she came to prayer meeting and with a happy smile and a heart filled with gratitude she read a letter from her husband, in which he wrote that in the trenches before Adrianople he had given his heart to Christ and knew Christ as his personal Saviour" (The Christian Advocate, May 22, 1913, p. 718). Truly, humble folk have found triumph in prayer.

Now, a single page out of the book of personal experience. I had been privileged to act as college pastor at Cazenovia Seminary, Cazenovia, New York, for a week. Christian counsel in public speech and in private con-

versation was the rule. Among other results were more than a score of decisions for Christ and reconsecrations to his service. When the campaign was over, at the suggestion of Dr. Skinner, the president, I dictated letters to the parents or guardians of the young people who had come to decision. Here is one answer:

G—— B——, Pa., Dec. 20, 1913.

Dear Mr. Burgwin:

We wish to thank you for your very kind letter, telling us the glad news that our boy had made a decision for Christ. . . . W—— had almost lost faith in his home church, and you cannot imagine how thankful we are that he has made a start in the right direction. . . . Mr. S——, an evangelist, is holding meetings here. Monday an invitation was given for those who desired special prayer for their dear ones to come forward. I hesitated, but something seemed to say, "Go." I went and offered silent prayer for my boy, and to-day came your letter as an answer to prayer. . . .

Yours with gratitude,

MR. AND MRS. E—— C——.

No wonder S. D. Gordon says: "The greatest thing anyone can do for God and for man is to pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing" (Quiet Talks on Prayer, by S. D. Gordon, p. 12).

It is this great thing which gives the Christian and the Church

III. THE ASSURANCE OF VICTORY

But there is no victory without the keynote. When machinery has been operated for a considerable period it is apt to develop what is called "lost motion," which means a loss of power. Something needs to be done to restore it to effectiveness. The skilled workman comes; he turns a screw here, tightens a tension there, adjusts new parts it may be, and the old machine is as good as new. When the church has developed "lost motion" and lacks conquering momentum, it is because of lost power. Then its members should follow the example of Jesus in the

practice of prayer, and heed anew his teaching, "When ye pray, say, Our Father, . . . Thy kingdom come."

I do not understand that prayer for our non-Christian friends compels them to become Christians in the sense that against their own wills they become faithful to Jesus Christ. I feel, rather, that the fervent, earnest prayer of the righteous has a direct influence upon the inner life of those for whom we pray; that our spirits thus working together with the divine Spirit do bring our friends face to face with the eternal verities, influencing them to give these truths the consideration which they deserve, with the result that they at length act as they know they ought. Thus the life of the spirit within them is quickened and they are born again, as all must be who enter God's kingdom.

Most surely this prayer of the church is being answered. The vision of the revelator inspires us with new zeal.

Here is his record: "The seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever" (Rev. 11. 15). The answer is sure, for so it is writ.

Jesus shall reign where'er the sun

Does his successive journeys run;

His kingdom spread from shore to shore,

Till moons shall wax and wane no more.

(Isaac Watts.)

Amen! and Amen! "Our Father, . . .
Thy kingdom come!"

CHAPTER V

THE FORCE

THERE is a statement in the eighth chapter of the book of Acts which gives us a view of the early church at work. It reads: "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8. 4). Persecution at Jerusalem scattered the followers of Jesus, excepting the apostles, throughout the regions of Judæa and Samaria. Unexpectedly a great door of opportunity was opened, into which these disciples entered, for they "went everywhere preaching the word." Their preaching was not in the formal fashion with which we are most familiar; it was the bringing of the glad tidings, the heralding of the evangel, in conversation with individuals, and by informal address to groups. Thus, what appeared at the first a dire misfortune was resolved into a mighty

blessing. It made Christianity a universal religion, and saved it from becoming a mere provincial faith. The persecuted Christians were transformed into a force to be reckoned with.

Dr. C. H. Parkhurst recalls that it was once remarked by the late William E. Dodge that a church is a preacher's force, not his field. Let us consider the church as "The Force," to be used by God to bring his kingdom to mankind.

I. THE FORCE

God was and is at work in this world reconciling men and women unto himself. He works through and appeals to individuals. His children are summoned to this task as workers together with him. The common practice now is for Christians to work by proxy. Through their church they support a professional ministry, and the proclamation of the evangel is deputed to the preacher, with the pulpit as

his vantage ground. The preacher and the pulpit are not to be despised and dispensed with. God knows they are needed, for he has called the preacher and established the pulpit. But world Christianization is not possible by this method merely. There is a force which is adequate for the great task.

Were we discussing a military campaign, we would not have the slightest difficulty in interpreting the word "force." It would refer to a body of soldiers, larger or smaller. And this body of soldiers would be composed, in general, of officers and ordinary privates. The officers would be responsible for the campaign in degree determined by their rank. The private soldiers would move and fight under the command and leadership of their officers. Campaigns are not won without leaders, and battles are not fought without soldiers. In these days great emphasis is being put upon the importance of the common soldier. The

church, I have said, is the force to be used of God in winning men to his kingdom. There is a close analogy between an army and the church.

Like a mighty army
Moves the church of God.

II. HOW CONSTITUTED

Providentially the church is well constituted to be used as a force without any great readjustment, excepting in the very important matter of activity. As an army has its private soldiers and its official staff, so a church has its membership and its officary. This characteristic of church organization goes back to a very early date. The first approach to an official Board of which we have intimation in the New Testament is found in the sixth chapter of the book of Acts. It grew out of a special emergency. Some there were who felt that in a certain department of the work there was neglect of a group of Christians. No evil

intent is charged. The apostles, against whom the complaint was made, acted wisely in requesting that they be relieved of this detail work and that seven brethren be elected from the multitude of the disciples to have charge—"seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6. 3). The "seven" were duly elected and assumed their responsibilities as prescribed. It is so recorded, and their names are given (Acts 6. 5). We know that two of these seven were active and successful evangelists, for so it is stated expressly, namely, Stephen (Acts 6. 8ff.) and Philip (Acts 8. 5; 21. 8). We observe too that subsequently evangelism was not an uncommon practice among all the Christians, for we have read that "They therefore that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." I doubt not all the seven were eminent in this work, but two

at least of their number were pre-eminent. These officials of the early church, having the full confidence of the Christian community, set an example of evangelizing zeal which was not lost upon the members. The followers of Christ were convinced, evidently, that it was their privilege and business to enroll disciples for Jesus Christ. They acted accordingly, with remarkable results. If the apostles and their successors, in Jerusalem and elsewhere, had been the only gospel preachers, it is highly probable that Christianity would have perished in the first century. It survived because of consecrated leadership and a unity of activity on the part of most Christians.

The church as an army of conquest and occupation, as now constituted, has a great advantage over the early church. To-day the church is established. There is not one society only, but thousands of them throughout the world, with millions of members, under

an effective ministry, and each society with an organization of officials. The average local church will have from twenty to thirty officials. These persons are selected because of certain expected qualifications. I open our Book of Discipline and read: "Let the stewards be persons of solid piety who are members of the church in the pastoral charge, who both know and love Methodist doctrine and Discipline, and are of good natural and acquired abilities to transact the temporal business of the church" (Discipline 1912, p. 213, Par. 306). Concerning trustees it is required that two thirds of the number shall be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In practice, so far as my experience goes, all have been members. Doubtless, there are emergencies which make exceptions necessary. It is well understood in our Methodism that class leaders, Sunday school superintendents, Epworth League presidents, Brotherhood pres-

idents, and all persons in positions of responsibility, shall exemplify Christian character, and it is at least hoped that they have the ability to teach and inspire others. We have standards for the selection of officials, it is evident, and they approximate the ideal dictated by the apostles—"men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." This is true; at least, as a rule, the members of the official board of a normal church are the peers of any group of equal number in the community as to intelligence, integrity, industry, and ability. The interests of the community—commercial, professional, political, social, charitable, civic, as well as religious—are represented upon the official boards of most churches. No group of persons in the church are so widely or so favorably known. None have so great an influence. They are key men. These facts are potent. They offer an advantage, and are an asset which

every church should be permitted to use.

Official position presents a great opportunity for spiritual as well as temporal leadership. Opportunity, we are agreed, spells responsibility, and responsibility ever stands for duty. As the directors of the material interests of the church, there is no saner way than by wise evangelism in which they can conserve their own success as officers and at the same time promote the advantage of the kingdom of God. Finances are never freer than under the impulse of a genuine revival. Further, members are increased, so that the financial constituency of the church is enlarged. But all of this should be viewed as a by-product of the spiritual triumph—spoils of battle willingly surrendered. As the officers of an army, the officers of the church should lead their various departments to Christian conquest. And the campaign plan should in-

clude the service of every member. This is not the common view of official duty. A revision of thought and of action in this matter is the crying demand of the time throughout the whole church. The sooner it is realized the better. I have known instances in which such change of view has been secured with marked results. Under the ministry of the Rev. Lewis K. Moore remarkable revivals, stirring the whole community with apparently impossible conversions, occurred at Southampton and Jamaica, Long Island, New York. This effective pastor-evangelist writes: "At Southampton and Jamaica I had exceptional work because of the cooperation of my official men—difficult to get but finally secured. I insisted that officials of the church were the official church, and that organic official cooperation only could secure success in evangelistic effort. In Southampton I pledged every official to attendance and support of

the services during the series, taking the stand that the officials are the leaders, and the people are doomed to follow their leaders. In Jamaica again I was successful in securing the cooperation of my board as such, and we had a similar result. My experience is, if you can get the sympathetic cooperation of your board, you have a revival that nothing can hinder. Without it *little* can be accomplished. The most superhuman task of the day is to get our officials. My experience is, get them and the rest is easy."

Of course leadership is valueless unless some are led. Church officials imply a church membership—a force to be employed. Soldiers, when they enlist, are pledged to fight for their country; if needs be, to suffer wounds; even to seal their loyalty with their lives. He who enlists as a soldier of Jesus Christ assumes responsibility also. He makes vows. Every church

member has declared deliberately faith in Christ as his Saviour. He has solemnly covenanted to hold sacred the ordinances of God, and to endeavor, as much as in him lies, to promote the welfare of his brethren and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom. More than this, he has in the baptismal covenant specifically renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil. He has promised too, before God and his people, to obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of his life, God being his helper. Here are pledges to service, indeed—Christian service. To honor them may mean suffering. In other days it has meant martyrdom. That there are souls among us in larger numbers than we surmise who would even die for their faith I doubt not. But God's holy will and commandments are not being kept, and the advancement of the Redeemer's

kingdom is not being promoted as they should be, under present methods.

And so they've voted the Devil out,
And of course the Devil's gone;
But simple people would like to know,
Who carries his business on?

(See *Thinking Black*, p. 228,
by Dan Crawford.)

III. ITS METHODS

It is the supreme business of the church, through its individual members, to make disciples and to build them up in our most holy faith. This is the intent of the great commission (Matt. 28. 19, 20). It should be, then, the immediate purpose and the insistent determination of every church member, official and ordinary, to realize for himself practically this expectation. John Wesley, in his early manhood, "met a 'serious man' who said to him: 'Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember, you cannot serve him alone. You must

therefore find companions or make them. The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion' " (Birrell, *Miscellanies*). That message impressed John Wesley profoundly. He never forgot it, and he never ceased to find companions and to make them. More, he insisted that the companions he found and made should act on a like principle. And they did, hosts of them. His followers to-day should do no less, for "The Bible knows nothing of solitary religion." Here is the truth which contains a suggestion as to the effective method to be used by God's force, the church, for the conquest of the world.

Dean Birney, of Boston University School of Theology, moved to its depths the National Convention of Methodist Men, at Indianapolis, Indiana, by his wide-heralded address, "The New Day in Evangelism." Dr. Birney speaks of Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost. He says that

“the final reality in this universe is not any truth that Peter announced or that can be announced in any public appeal. That final reality is personality, and the only evangelism that will ever bring this world to God is the evangelism that personalizes itself as evangelism has never done in the past. . . . The coming evangelism will not simply depend upon a few preachers and a few missionaries, but upon a multitude of persons; it will use the foolishness of preaching not less, but it will use the high wisdom of redeemed personality immeasurably more. The sermon that won the three thousand to Christ on the day of Pentecost has dominated our ideals and methods all too long. We have too long tried to bring in the Kingdom by addition, and the Kingdom will never come except by arithmetical progression. If Peter had saved three thousand souls every day after Pentecost, and if his so-called apostolic

successors had had religion enough to do the same thing, it would have taken a thousand years to bring the world to Christ as the world was in Peter's day, and there would have been thirty new generations unaccounted for; but if each of the three thousand had gone out to save one a year, and each new disciple had done the same, the entire world would have been reached for Jesus Christ a whole generation before the Gospel of John was written. If his blessed feet were lifting from this earth to-day in ascension, leaving twelve men to save fifteen hundred million, and all the world were pagan besides, and the twelve were to go forth each to win one a year, and each convert were to do the same, before the babe born yesterday would reach eight and twenty summers, every man and woman in this world would have been brought to God, or at least have had the gospel preached to him or her. I

submit that, in the light of that fact, these nineteen hundred years of so-called Christian history are dangerously near to blasphemy when they are held up against the white light of the cross. And in the light of that fact the dream that has been in great souls, of the gospel being preached to every creature in this generation is not fanciful at all, but is of easy accomplishment if every nominal discipleship were vitalized into reality" (see *The Christian Advocate*, New York, December 11, 1913). Calculate for yourself how this principle would apply to your own community. Then do what you can to introduce it as a method to be persisted in. Soon the Christian church would be recognized as a conquering force.

The church, as a force, composed of a membership united to realize a great expectation—the coming of God's kingdom—is to labor, each member in his place, being conformed to the

principles and practices of the kingdom. Faith! Obedience! Service! Real faith! Purposeful obedience! Aggressive and intelligent service! Christian endeavor which is not perfunctory, formal, a bore; but real, based upon a devout consecration to God and his kingdom—a consecration so thorough as to make Christian work pleasurable, enjoyable, a delight. Such a consecration as will lead Christians to cry out, “Woe, woe is me, if I tell not the glad tidings!” If we could—if we *would*, in view of the pressing need—but saturate ourselves with the great things of the gospel; the awfulness of sin, the possibility of repentance and consequent pardon, the fact of sonship with God and the holy life in Christ Jesus, remembering on the other hand the facts of retribution, alienation from God consequent upon impenitence, with the assurance of an immortality, for weal or woe, determined by man’s attitude toward gospel truth

—O how burning would be the zeal
of our souls, how vital our service,
how all-conquering the results!

Fling out the banner! sin-sick souls
That sink and perish in the strife
Shall touch in faith its radiant hem,
And spring immortal into life.

(George W. Doane.)

CHAPTER VI

THE FIELD

“SAY not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest” (John 4. 35).

When Jesus came into Samaria, where his disciples least expected it, there he found a field ready for sowing, out of which was reaped at once an abundant harvest. The woman with whom he conversed at Jacob's Well was converted. “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman” (John 4. 39). He abode there two days. It is written, “And many more believed because of his own word” (John 4. 41). That was a remarkable harvest. There was a quick sowing and an immediate reaping. There are

no intimations that such experience is to be expected every time. Jesus himself was not thus favored. But it is evident that the Master-Evangelist, with open vision, seized immediately the opportunity for sowing and reaping when it presented itself. And to us he never ceases to say, "Follow me," and "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10. 37).

Recognizing as Christians the duty imparted by the great commission, it is pertinent indeed for us to inquire as to the field in which we are to labor, that we may return with joy at the great "harvest home," bringing our sheaves with us.

I. THE REVIVAL CAMPAIGN

The time was when men thought that the open church, with a rousing revival campaign, to which the people came in throngs, was the great field for evangelism. The bulk of the membership for many churches came

from this field. Nor is this opportunity exhausted. It still yields a good harvest. Occasionally, conditions are present—the fields are ripe unto the harvest—under which the revival campaign produces a wonderful return. Of course, if even one soul is truly converted, any expenditure of time and means is justified, for as Billy Bray, the little, illiterate Cornish miner-evangelist, used to say, “One soul’s worth more ’n all o’ Lunnon.” To-day, however, we face competing and diverting influences exceeding anything our forebears knew. Providentially, we have opportunities and facilities, offering a favorable field for practical evangelism more far-reaching than was possible in our early church history, or ever before, in America. The revival campaign has its place. It never will be superseded; but it is to be supplemented and made effective by such other evangelistic opportunities as may be at hand.

To-day, so far as the field is concerned, when we think of practical evangelism, a foremost embarrassment is the magnitude of opportunity. Our most accessible and most productive field for evangelism is the Sunday school. The cultivation of this field is worthy of our deepest devotion, our completest consecration of time and talent. In his Indianapolis address, Dean Birney pleaded that the church centralize its efforts around the conservation of life instead of the reclamation of life. "There is just one way to save loss," he says, "the incalculable loss that our church has sustained all along, and that is by feeding lambs instead of hunting sheep" ("The New Day in Evangelism." *The Christian Advocate*, December 11, 1913). He urges, if we cannot do both (we can), that we keep the lambs and let the few sheep stray, rather than to hunt a few sheep and let the lambs scatter, never to be found again. Cure of

disease is good. This no one will deny. But, surely, prevention is better. Wild oats and whirlwinds are not essential to salvation. Indeed, such sowing and reaping reduce very largely, not the possibility but the probability of salvation. Dr. Birney utters a profound truth when he says that the kingdom will never be here until the child is placed in the heart and center of all our prayers and efforts. The Sunday school makes it possible for the church to act on this principle.

II. THE SUNDAY SCHOOL AS A FIELD

Survey with me the Sunday school as a field for practical evangelism. According to Dr. Edgar Blake, corresponding secretary of the Board of Sunday schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, our present (January, 1914) Sunday school enrollment is 4,326,934, which is a gain of 1,034,469 in six years. The increase for the past six years has been three times as great as

for the same period preceding. Our Methodist Episcopal Sunday schools have reported the conversion of more than 950,000 scholars during the past six years, and have contributed probably not less than that number to the membership of the church. Were it not for the accessions from the Sunday schools, our church membership would decline at the rate of 100,000 a year. In the year 1913 our schools report the conversion of more than 178,000 scholars. Seven hundred more schools report the conversion of scholars this year than last, all of which is well and encouraging, too. In Dr. Blake's annual report, made in January, 1914, from which we cull facts and figures, the statistical returns for the year 1913 show that we now have: 35,632 Sunday schools; 383,825 officers and teachers; 198,703 members of Home Department; 281,178 members of Cradle Roll; 3,402,278 scholars of all grades.

Every denomination has a great opportunity for evangelism in its Sunday schools. The Methodist Episcopal Church has the greatest, for ours is the largest single Sunday school constituency in the world. As Dr. Blake figures it, it numbers a million more members than all of the Baptist denominations combined. It is twice as large as all the Presbyterians of the United States and Canada. It numbers more than three times as many members as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; nearly four times as many as the Disciples; more than six times as many as the Congregational; and more than eight times as many as the Episcopalian. Truly, our Sunday schools offer a great field for practical evangelism!

Our Sunday school leaders have been insisting for some years that the Sunday school is the essential element in the development of the church. Their claim is verified by the figures which

they have been able to present. They inform us that ninety-five per cent of our ministers started in the Sunday school; ninety per cent of our church workers came out of the Sunday school; seventy per cent of our churches were first started as Sunday schools, and eighty-five per cent of our church membership came from the Sunday school. In this connection we must remember that five sixths of all conversions occur before the passing of the eighteenth birthday, and that the average age of conversion, according to such painstaking investigators as President G. Stanley Hall, Professor Edwin D. Starbuck, Professor George A. Coe, and Professor William James, is about the sixteenth year. Surely, then, the Sunday school age is the most desirable for high Christian enterprise. Yet an astonishingly large percentage of our young people never profess conversion and are lost to the church. There is startling evidence

that we are not measuring up to our opportunity. Some time ago the Wesleyan Church of England appointed a commission to investigate this matter. The commission has reported that only ten per cent of their Sunday school membership are held in active membership in the church, and that an additional ten per cent remain in a somewhat informal relationship. Eighty per cent of the Sunday school membership is lost to the church entirely. Dr. Blake, writing of this matter in a personal letter, says that no such complete survey has as yet been made in our own denomination, but that from individual cases which have been brought to his attention, and from surveys that have been made in local fields, he is confident that the situation until very recently has not been any better in our own denomination than in the Wesleyan Church. That is to say, after all our work in the Sunday school, we only succeed in

saving for Christ and his church from ten per cent to twenty per cent of the young people committed to our charge.

Is not that fact like the prod of a thorn? The achievements of the past and the opportunity of the present impel us to more effective, practical endeavor. There are 2,300,000 scholars in our schools who are not yet members of the church. Of these, 1,500,000 are above eight years of age. Every one of our 383,825 officers and teachers should be an evangelist. Our most recent record shows that, working for a whole year in this great field, there has been just one conversion for every two teachers. Is not Dr. Blake right when he says that it is a sorrowful showing? Yet a hopeful element is apparent in the steadily increasing emphasis being put upon personal evangelism by the teachers, the wider observance of Decision Day, and the constantly increasing number of schools

reporting evangelistic results. If the gain of increase reported for 1913 continues, within four years our Sunday schools will be reporting the conversion of a quarter of million scholars annually.

Bent upon realizing the greatest harvest possible, we should proceed to this work with confidence and with high enthusiasm, for when we lead the child into the kingdom we are acting in accord with the nature and constitution of the child, and also in harmony with the will of God. The child has spiritual capacity. Also, if we understand Jesus's teachings, the child has spiritual hunger, and we are barbarous if we do not feed it. Professor MacMullen reminds us that there are still people who say that religious beliefs and religious habits are matters of mature decision, and the child must not be biased in such things but be left absolutely free from dictation or training, lest in later life

it lose its religious rights because of undue influence earlier. "Which proceeds on the assumption either that the religious instinct comes into being at maturity, or that, if part of a child's dowry, it, of all its instincts, must be left to take care of itself. Against the first idea all the facts of human development"—including the facts and figures relating to conversion presented above—"fairly shout a denial. It is not in the man the religious impulse springs into life. On the contrary,

The man perceives it die away
And fade into the light of common day,

which is not merely poetry, but biography. And the second idea says that what is animal and what is human in a rudimentary way may be fed, but what is divine and supremely human must either forage for itself or starve. . . . The simple truth is that the child is a child physically,

mentally, and spiritually, and God means that those who guard it shall see to the development of all its muscles and the feeding of all its hunger, the spiritual no less than the physical" (The Rev. Dr. Wallace MacMullen, in "The Child and The Kingdom," pp. 10, 11). Clearly, then, if we are to be workers together with God, we must take advantage of the normal conditions of age and disposition for leading the young people to Christ, which is made possible by the Sunday school. But every Sunday school worker of experience knows that there are lines of influence, for good or evil, leading from the Sunday school to the home. The Sunday school comes out of the homes of the community, and it leads us back to the homes.

III. THE HOME AS A FIELD

A story is told of D. L. Moody, who at one time thought that it was

all right if he got hold of the children, but he soon found that it wasn't all right. The home life undid his work in the Sabbath school. This fact doubtless accounts in part for the fact that not more than ten per cent of our Sunday school scholars are won and held for Christ and his church. Mr. Moody found that he had to get hold of the older people. "I used to illustrate this," he says, "by a parable that I had heard of the frogs. The fishes gathered a council together to see if the frogs could be persuaded to walk forward instead of backward, and resolved to teach the young frogs how to walk in the proper way, that they might in turn go home and teach the older frogs. The walking school for frogs was instituted and was quite successful. The young frogs graduated in walking forward, and were sent home to teach their fathers and mothers the correct mode. To the surprise and disappointment of the fishes,

they found out soon afterward that it worked the other way. The old frogs had corrected the young frogs again, and once more the whole tribe, old and young, were walking backward." And so Mr. Moody concluded that Sabbath school work was not enough, that it had to be supplemented by an earnest and conscientious effort to reach the home life of the fathers and mothers. The fact of the matter is that many of the parents of the children whom we meet in the Sunday school are, in so far as religion is concerned, walking backward. It is not enough to instruct the children to go forward. If our work is to be in any large measure abiding, parents must be reached as well.

The homes of a community do present a field for active Christian endeavor. Many a home is white for the harvest. If the Christians of the community are all enrolled as members of our churches, and if only true

Christians are saved souls, then there is a multitude in every center of population which should be sought for Jesus Christ. A large proportion of this multitude will not come to church. The church should go to the home; but before we speak of methods, let us inform ourselves specifically as to the opportunity. Make a religious census of your own community and compare it with the population. In the suburb of New York city (Hempstead, Long Island, New York), where this study is being made, according to the Brooklyn Eagle Almanac for 1914, the church membership of the village is 2,003. The population is approximately 6,000 persons. Our county, Nassau, in 1910 had a population of 83,930, and a total church membership of 28,834. Our neighbor, Kings County, which is the Borough of Brooklyn, in 1910, had a population of 1,634,351; in that year the churches of the borough reported a

membership of 590,890 persons. It should be said that in the three cases the figures include the Roman Catholic Church which reports parishioners as distinguished from members. Calculation will show that in each one of these three units of population the proportion of church membership to population is approximately as one to three. While this proportion probably will not be maintained throughout continental United States, the total of the church membership being 37,280,000, as compiled for 1913 by the authority of the Federal Council of Churches, by Dr. H. K. Carroll, still it is evident that in many of our communities upward of two thirds of the population are not professing Christians. These persons are to be found in the homes of America; they afford a universal field for practical evangelism. Included in this field are all sorts and conditions of people: There are nominal Christians and persons

who are Christian in their sympathies, many of whom may be easily reached. Among them are the multitudes of the children, so many of whom are to be found in our Sunday schools. A large part of our growing foreign population is not included in the church census. Some of them, like the Italians, while nominally Roman Catholic, are actually quite indifferent to the Roman Catholic Church. There are possibly a million Jews in Greater New York; only 35,321 of them were enrolled as members of synagogues in 1913 (compiled from Eagle Almanac, 1914). In addition to these there is the evil element—all that is included in the phrase “the underworld”—and every propagator of wrong, which is so largely represented by the saloons, the gambling places, and other bad resorts. These are actively and aggressively antagonistic to all good influences of a religious and Christian character. Such conditions complicate

the difficulties, but they intensify the need, and challenge the faith and consecration of the Christian community.

There are two classes of homes which we find. One class has members of the family who are Christians. A single child from the Sunday school may alone be holding aloft the torch of Christ. In some instances it is true that a little child does lead them. But in the majority of cases we must rely upon Christian parents to rear their little ones in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We must not leave the child free to make religious decisions in mature life. Evil influences are not deferred. They are always impinging and intruding. Otherwise, why were we taught to pray, "Lead us not into temptation"? Parents, when they fail to lead the child as they ought in this matter are hostile to the highest good of their own offspring. They, who should be the best friends, are

actually the foes of the child. The second class of homes has no loyal Christian in the household. Their children may be attendants upon the Sunday school, or they meet our children in the public school or upon the playground. This fact enables us to extend our constituency list. Or they are neighbors of some of our church members. Soon or late our people should find a point of religious contact. It may be very soon, as when they move into the community as strangers and suffer the pangs of homesickness. Then a word of welcome and of kindness is apt to be remembered. That word may be one link in the chain by which we shall bind our neighbors to Jesus Christ. Need gives opportunity and brings welcome. Illness, adversity, and death, with its sorrows, open doors as of steel shut against us apparently forever. May we ever be ready to enter in! The home and the Church must join forces

in intelligent and increasing service looking to the salvation of the children and of all others within the field of our influence.

At this time, in New York city, the Roman Catholic Church is planning to gather its young people who attend the public schools into weekday classes for religious instruction. They act wisely. To follow their example would make evident our wisdom. To be sure, the work of our Sunday schools exceeds theirs by far. But it is inadequate. Many of the Roman Catholic children are in parochial schools and receive regular daily religious instruction. Every child, without exception, should have definite and systematic religious training under the tutelage of a sympathetic teacher, for religion really cannot be taught; it must be caught. Otherwise, there is loss to the child, the family, the community, and the state—loss which can never be repaired.

Christians, let us lift our eyes unto the fields! If they are not yet white, ready for the harvest, let us sow the seed, with tears if need be, and cultivate them with the fidelity of amazing sacrifice if so required, ever ready with eager sickles to gather the harvest of redeemed souls, that, in His own day, we may return to Him, bringing our sheaves with us.

CHAPTER VII

THE CAMPAIGN

IN Saint Paul's second letter to Timothy, whom he expected to be his successor in apostolic labors, he admonished him to preach the word, to be instant in season, out of season, and to do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4. 2, 5). That this counsel was given to an individual does not impair its applicability to any and all who are Christians. It has been shown that the world can never be evangelized by the most devoted service of the ministers and the missionaries working alone. If the kingdom of God is to come to the race in any full measure, there must be a general movement among Christians. In writing to Timothy, Saint Paul gives us a principle of procedure which is sound and which will prove efficient in prac-

tice. Christian conquest requires an unceasing evangelism.

Our far-reaching field for Christian endeavor extends to the last person on the planet. That we have a great force for the prosecution of the campaign has been indicated. This force, like a conquering army, is to enter the field for its campaign of conquest.

I. THE CAMPAIGN AND ITS PURPOSE

A campaign consists of the operations of any army, or force of any kind, for the accomplishment of some particular object. The Christian Church is a force engaged in operations which anticipate the accomplishment of a specific task, namely, the deliverance of men from sin, its power and its consequences. That is, we are set to do the will of God that evil may be overcome in human lives. The Adversary is ever busy. Therefore, the evangelist must be ever alert and active. There is no discharge in this warfare.

II. METHODS

“Preach the word.” “Do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim. 4. 2, 5). The doctrine of Christ crucified for the sins of the whole world is to be preached, proclaimed. The truth must be enforced that there is no salvation but by faith in Jesus Christ. The matter is urgent. Apparent opportunities for service are to be seized. Other opportunities are to be found. Stated times and usual places are not to be neglected. Yet it will be understood that any time and every place are proper for God’s work. In all the ministry of the church the proclamation of the evangel, which is evangelism, should have a foremost place. The soul-winning work of the church should be constant, the campaign should be unceasing. And we make a serious mistake when we rely upon the public appeal, the professional proclamation of the word, as

our chief evangelistic agency. Such appeal should be made, must be made. We may well put more emphasis upon it than we do. Yet we should not depend merely upon the minister to be the evangelist and the church service the opportunity. Every organization should be in alliance with the church service. All the officers and teachers in the organizations should be the loyal allies of the pastor and of each other, and all the members of these organizations should be urged to active endeavor, doing the work of evangelists, in the duly appointed services, as also in many if not all of our church and social activities. All our church enterprises, even though remote from evangelism in our thought, should tend to maintain the evangelistic note. If the social, the lecture, the entertainment—the service of any kind—is such as to discredit the evangel, if its spirit antagonizes the gospel, it has no place in the

work of the church, because it interferes with the accomplishment of its purpose.

Further, the campaign should give a larger place to the Christian nurture of the children. Of course the children should be present at the regular services of the church. Parents too should insist upon the attendance of their children at the sessions of the Sunday school and at all the meetings provided for the religious instruction of the young people. This is vital evangelism. More: parents should make time for religious instruction in the home also. The family altar should not become ancient history. It should be a potent influence in every Christian home. "If our religion is true," remarks a wise man, "we are in duty bound to preach it." He who thus tells the good tidings is a practical evangelist. Sometime since, in Chicago, the papal delegate, who is the official representative of the

Pope in this country, said to a large Roman Catholic gathering: "Whenever there is a decline in faith and morals it can be restored through the training of the children. From one child rightly reared a whole generation of Christians can come. What they receive to-day they will give fifteen years hence. The great task of the Church of Christ is the training of the children." We may add that even in an age of faith, if the religious training of the children be neglected, at once will begin a decline in faith and morals. Pastors and people must find a way in fuller measure of providing for the adequate and sympathetic religious training and inspiration of our children and young people. Shall we not make this a definite part of our campaign? We may seriously ask too if this work does not extend very definitely to the recreational life of our people, young and old. The problem of amusements is not to be dodged forever. While

the Christian worker dodges and fails to provide vent for innocent tendencies, his friends and his children give themselves to indulgence, it may be, in degrading amusements. Surely, it must be that in the program of Him who entered into the joys and gayeties of the marriage feast there are satisfying and pure recreations.

At this point we make a distinction between evangelism and revivalism. Evangelism is the constant note in the life and work of the normal Christian; it is the unceasing endeavor of the true Christian Church. The revival meeting is a method of evangelism, a desirable and necessary method. We may think of evangelism as the seed-sowing and cultivation period, and of revivalism as the harvest time. The revival meeting means unusual effort; pressure is brought to bear; all the workers are engaged and every endeavor is intensified, that nothing may be lost. Various plans are used in

revivalism. Two classes of plans are apparent. A church may conduct a revival campaign independently of any other, or there may be a union of two or more churches.

When it is proposed to act independently, as also in a union effort, the question arises, What is the best season for the revival meeting? Different experts give different answers. That far-famed Presbyterian minister, Dr. Theodore L. Cuyler, in his very fruitful evangelistic ministry, ever watched with open eye and ear for the manifestation of the Spirit's presence. The first signs of such special manifestation found him ready for action. Nothing was permitted to interfere. At once a series of meetings would be instituted. Church officials and workers would be marshaled for the campaign, and a large ingathering of souls was the result. "I have no doubt," writes Dr. Cuyler in his *Recollections of a Long Life*

(page 85), "that very often a spark of divine influence is allowed to die for want of being fanned by prayer and prompt labors, whereas, it is sometimes dashed out, as by a bucket of cold water thrown on by inconsistent or quarrelsome church members. It is to Christians that Saint Paul sent the message, 'Quench not the Spirit.'" The Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn, New York, testifies to the value of Dr. Cuyler's plan. Distinguished from Dr. Cuyler's method of watchful waiting is that of the Rev. Dr. Charles L. Goodell, of the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who is the exponent of a regular revival period. Said Dr. Goodell in his famous address at Northfield, delivered August 11, 1906: "I say in July, 'Brethren, we are going to take the month of January for revival services; whether the wind blows high or blows low, we are going to take that month.' I have a

notion that God does not need to be importuned to be favorable in our case. . . . God is waiting to be gracious. The whole air is full of Pentecosts that have never come down because there was no place for the cloven tongues. . . . I believe in having a special revival season" (The Price of Winning Souls, p. 24f.). Truly, this plan has richly rewarded Dr. Goodell, for he is able to testify, "I say to His glory that in these twenty-five years of my ministry I have never received less than one hundred souls a year, and in some years many times that number; and in all these twenty-five years I have not passed a single monthly communion service without receiving some into the church" (Ibid., p. 9). In practice both methods may be employed. An annual revival service is well worth while. If that annual effort is made in January, and unusual interest should develop in June or October, or at any other time, with

Dr. Cuyler, let the pastor of the church be ready for action.

Another question intrudes: Shall we employ a professional evangelist, or shall we be our own evangelists? Some there are who have a strong antipathy to professional evangelists; yet they have been at work in the church from New Testament days. Saint Paul tells us that when Christ ascended up on high "He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4. 11, 12). In our own times the work of Moody and Sankey, Torrey, Chapman and Alexander, Gypsy Smith, William A. Sunday, and many others has brought blessing to multitudes. Doubtless their efforts have strengthened the Christian Church. Some ministers and others believe that every pastor should be his own evangelist, but there are few

ministers or churches which follow any one theory in this matter. The best of pastor evangelists will employ professional helpers at times, and, it may be, with most satisfactory results. This is the testimony of Dr. Cuyler: "It has not been my practice to invite the labors of an evangelist; but in January, 1872, Mr. Dwight L. Moody, with whom I had as yet but a slight acquaintance, . . . said to the superintendent of our mission, 'What a nice place this is to hold meetings in!' " The meetings were held and the revival came. "It spread to the parent church, and over one hundred converts made their public confession of Christ before our communion table" (Recollections of a Long Life, p. 90).

Should a professional evangelist be invited, it must be understood that he will have his peculiarities, some of which may not please some good people. It is assumed that the character of the evangelist is unquestioned, other-

wise he would not have been employed. It may be that his power will be increased over the many by his peculiarities. At any rate, the church and the workers must dismiss all suspicion and silence criticism if success is expected. If this cannot be done, it were better to dismiss the evangelist at once. We cannot cramp a man's personality and expect him to do his best.

There are very able ministers who have not had success in their own revival services. I recall one such who was my pastor. He was a mighty preacher. He built up the churches of which he had charge. No man has ever had a greater constructive religious influence upon my own life. Many others bear a like testimony. Yet he felt inability in directing a revival meeting, and confessed it. On the other hand, it must be recognized that there are persons who have special endowments, the value of which

has been increased by experience, which make them peculiarly effective as evangelists. They have a way of getting to the conscience and the heart. They are able to arouse the indifferent, to bring the unconverted to the point of decision. Their worth has been proved by their ministry. It is true, doubtless, that they can accomplish wonders, under God, which otherwise might never be realized. Nevertheless, it is my personal conviction, based upon experience, that if the officials and Christian leaders of the church will give themselves loyally to the task of practical evangelism, uniting in the preparatory work heartily, engaging enthusiastically in the revival meeting by giving personal invitation to others and attending the services themselves, never permitting the old flag to touch the ground, the pastor will rarely need a professional evangelist to assist him, and the work will be satisfactory and efficient to an un-

usual degree. Even if the evangelist be invited, if there be conversions, the people must needs help. If there be a lack of cooperation, disappointment as to results is a foregone conclusion.

At times the churches of a community will engage in the union plan of revival service. In villages and small towns all the evangelical churches may unite to their advantage. The same is true of large cities, as demonstrated by the work of Chapman and Alexander, William A. Sunday, and others. Chapman and Alexander conduct what is known as a simultaneous campaign. The city is divided into many groups of churches. Each group will select a central church where the meetings of the group will be conducted by the appointed evangelist and his gospel singer. There will be one great central meeting place where Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander will have charge. Many committees will arrange

the details of the campaign and for special phases of the work esteemed essential to largest success, as Prayer Committee, Woman's Auxiliary, Foreign Tongues, Young People, Boys, Shop Meetings, Noonday Meetings, Publicity and Press. Then there are committees on Evangelists and Singers, Church Music, Personal Work and Ushers, Finance, Entertainment, etc. In Mr. Sunday's work the Tabernacle in which he preaches is made the center of the religious endeavor of the community during his mission, and for the whole period all the services in all the cooperating churches are postponed, with the exception of the Sunday school sessions. He too has a corps of expert workers, and special meetings are arranged for factory employes at the noon hour, for business men, for business women, for students, and for every class of persons in the city. Every detail of the campaign is worked out to a nicety. A somewhat

different method of procedure is that which has been employed by the General Conference Commission on Aggressive Evangelism of the Methodist Episcopal Church, known as Cooperative Evangelism. In general, this plan is similar to that used by Chapman and Alexander, excepting that its work is a union of Methodist Episcopal churches.

Such movements as these have a special value. The churches of a community, without fear of trespass, can make a united appeal. Every home can be entered. They prove what may have been far from evident—that there is a unity in Christendom.

We are not divided,
All one body we,
One in hope and doctrine,
One in charity.

This refers especially to an undenominational movement. It is true that such a movement has its disadvantages

and drawbacks. There is the danger that too much reliance will be placed upon methods which in themselves are good, but which are only a means to an end. Then there are workers who may not feel a sense of responsibility for a large movement as they would for one in their own church. There are persons too who find it difficult to labor under the unusual conditions; they are accustomed to a certain procedure. Deviation therefrom confuses them, causing them to lose interest, it may be to become adverse critics. Such a movement, therefore, requires a large resource of sweet charity, a determination on the part of Christians to live and work together in harmony, striving for one thing—the advantage of God's kingdom, and not merely the advancement of one particular church society. The workers must possess self-control and self-renunciation, but out of it, if the Holy Spirit be permitted to lead the way, amity between

Christians and friendship between God and man will come. Then, a properly conducted campaign of this kind appeals to many who would not heed the ordinary revival summons.

Such a movement, however, is not always practicable. The forces cannot be united. There is evident need of special effort. Seed-sowing and cultivation have been done. The warmth and activity of the revival service makes the harvest natural for many who might otherwise be deaf and mute. So the individual church will find it prudent and necessary to proceed independently—and will do so.

But whatever may be the plan as to the revival meeting, little will be accomplished unless the principles already enunciated are faithfully used. God's Spirit must be heeded. Men must seek to save their fellows. The textbook, the Holy Bible, must be mastered. Prayer must be employed. Yes, and work must be done. The

force must contest the field if there is to be a conquest. The preachers and evangelists who have been most successful have been and are prodigious workers. There must be an unceasing effort if there is to be the greatest result.

Let no mistake be made: preparation and cooperation, whether for an independent or a union movement, are essential to success. Surely, the pastor and members of a Christian church will not expect a successful revival unless there be vigilant and intelligent preparation therefor. The farmer does not expect to reap if there has been no seed-sowing and no cultivation of the soil. Nor does he anticipate a manifold return if the growing crops are interfered with and uprooted. He protects them as best he may from the ravages of beasts and birds and vermin. Likewise the Christian worker will be a seed-sower and cultivator and a protector of his field. In pulpit

ministrations and in pastoral service in the homes of his people, and elsewhere, the minister of Jesus Christ will be an unceasing herald of the evangel. Thus he plants seed and cultivates his field. Christian workers in every department of the church life, even when immersed in the demands of business and social engagements will, by consistency of conduct and prudent counsels, study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Any church undertaking which cannot be employed, directly or indirectly, as a means of saving men should be suspected as improper. I believe that there is no legitimate social function which cannot be used as an evangelistic agency in that it affords opportunity for making and cementing friendships, out of which influences to the religious advantage of the unsaved may be put in motion. So that, in

the revival campaign, the various organizations of the church should be considered and engaged. Such organizations as the official board, the Brotherhood, the Ladies' Aid Society, the Epworth League or Christian Endeavor Society, the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the Woman's Home Missionary Society should provide helpers in the meetings and callers upon the people. The mere regular attendance of these persons is helpful. Such attendance should be a matter of honor and loyalty to the cause. It will, in many instances, be supplemented by personal effort of inestimable value as opportunity presents itself. Gospel singing, Christian conversation and prayer at the altar or in the inquiry room—in some such ways the consecrated worker will find a chance to tell the story. The Sunday school and the Junior Epworth League should never be overlooked. Here, as we have observed before, is a most

fruitful field white for the harvest. Sunday school officers and teachers and Junior workers should be actively and sympathetically evangelistic, and by the instruction of the lips and the inspiration of the life should never cease to influence young people for Jesus Christ. Naturally, there will be in the program of every Sunday school a carefully worked out plan for Decision Day services, with which pastor and superintendent, with officers and teachers, will be in perfect accord. The effort is certain to be successful when wise preparation has been made, followed by calm, yet earnest and hearty appeal. It should be remembered, however, that success in this endeavor must be followed by regular, intelligent Christian culture, and that otherwise much of the work done will be nugatory. This, indeed, is true in every case. Christian converts must be nurtured if they are to become mature and fruitful. The fruitless

Christian, according to the Book, is a Christian only in name. This is confirmed by Jesus's parable of the vine (John 15), in which he says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples" (John 15. 8). Of course the convert should be led to commit himself publicly as soon as possible. He should repeat his commitment frequently. He should be counseled to join some branch of the Christian Church and to give himself actively to some practical form of Christian endeavor which will be directed toward reaching the unsaved and in building up the saved. Bible study of a devotional character is essential, and the practice of prayer is necessary. It is almost a certainty that such habits will produce success in the Christian life. Certain it is that without them the Christian will be doomed to failure.

Whether we are planning for Decision Day in the Sunday school or

any kind of a revival service in connection with the church, the matter of preparation is essential. It is true that great revivals have come occasionally without conscious and deliberate preparation. Dr. J. O. Peck, in his classic on evangelism, *The Revival and the Pastor*, tells of such a spontaneous revival which came under the ministry of Dr. Lyman Beecher. "It came suddenly and powerfully. It swept the town with mighty power. After it was over Dr. Beecher was visiting a bedridden member of his church in a remote part of the town. This member told him that day after day for weeks he had felt a great burden of prayer for the unsaved, and that he began at one end of the town and prayed for each household until he had included every family. Then, as if this were not enough, he prayed for each family again. In an instant Dr. Beecher knew from whence the revival came. It was born in the

heart of that bedridden mighty wrestler with God" (p. 170). It is evident, therefore, that the spontaneous revival was really one which had been prepared for by the faithful, prayerful ministry of a shut-in and suffering invalid, as well as by the fidelity of Mr. Beecher, the minister of the church.

When all has been said and done, plans and methods are of practical noneffect apart from the mind which was in Christ Jesus—the mind which has as its supreme purpose the doing of God's will. The spirit of sincerity, of enthusiasm, of zealous purpose, based upon personal experience and glowing faith, engendering a deep consecration to Christian service as soul-winners, is essential if the greatly desired results are to be achieved. This spirit will seize the opportunity which is apparent and will make the opportunity which does not appear of itself.

There are certain musical melodies which have gripped the human heart—"Old Black Joe," "Home, Sweet Home," "Jesus, Lover of My Soul." The composer, appreciating the beauty of the melody, produces a piece based on that melody but with infinite variations. The musician knows that the theme is ever apparent, though almost concealed at times. It may be very soft in the treble, yet it is there. It may be distinctly and powerfully sounded in the bass, so that no one mistakes. Then, again, all the parts unite in singing the song as the whole world knows it. This will serve as a figure, illustrating how evangelism can be made the dominant note in Christian work, while all other interests receive proper attention. Christianity is a great symphony, elaborate in its proportions and grand in its purposes. It does concern itself with every proper human interest. As we study its teachings, as we listen to its wonder-

ful music, in minor or major, low or high, we catch the strains of an old message, an angel's message, FEAR NOT: FOR, BEHOLD, I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY, WHICH SHALL BE TO ALL PEOPLE (Luke 2. 10). It is the evangel. And he who really hears that message must tell the tale.

APPENDIX

SOME PLANS FOR PRACTICAL EVANGELISM

I. FOR THE LOCAL CHURCH

1. *Leadership*

WHETHER the pastor is the evangelist himself or has invited an outside evangelist to help him in the revival campaign, the pastor must be the leader. The final responsibility is so largely his that he should be expected to command the situation. Of course it is assumed that the pastor is a Christian, possessed of common sense and consecration.

Ordinarily, with wisdom the revival campaign may be planned for annually.

2. *Support*

a. The official board of the church should commit itself by resolution and by the personal consecration of its

members to this essential and beneficent work. They should constitute themselves a royal guard, ever supporting their pastor and leader, and encouraging him to go forward in the fight.

b. The official board should authorize a Committee on Evangelism. Let it consist of the pastor as chairman, the Sunday school superintendent, the Brotherhood president, the Epworth League president, the Junior Epworth League superintendent, the Ladies' Aid Society president, the presidents respectively of the Woman's Home Missionary Society and of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, the presidents of any other vital organizations which may be peculiar to the local church, together with such other outstanding persons in the church whose talents and character commend them as efficient advisers and helpers.

These officers of organizations are the pastor's lieutenants throughout the

year. They have charge and leadership of detachments of Christian workers, and through them each group is to be pledged to earnest, practical evangelism in the revival campaign. Some of the leaders of detachments are in a position to help greatly. Take, for instance, the opportunity of the Sunday school superintendent.

The Sunday school gives the church its most accessible evangelistic opportunity. The superintendent, his officers and teachers, led by the pastor, will plan definitely and prayerfully for a clear, straightforward appeal, or series of appeals, to the members of the school, especially those who have passed eight or ten years of age, to be made during the campaign. It may be wise, if departments meet separately, to make a special appeal to each department, as the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior. Of course it will be recognized that always in this most serious and important bus-

iness in which Christians may engage, methods must be adjusted to fit local conditions, whether in the Sunday school or any other department. There are various plans, known by different names, which have been used in Sunday school evangelism. We commend as a thoroughgoing and very practical method that which was developed by Bishop Henderson in his work, a description of which is given in an attractive booklet entitled *Decision Day*, which can be procured from The Methodist Book Concern, at small cost.

In the Junior Epworth League, the Boys' Brigade, the Boy Scouts, the Brotherhood it may be possible to reach some by a special appeal who otherwise would be missed. One who is familiar with any workable *Decision Day* plan for the Sunday school will be able to devise a program which will be effective in a Junior Epworth League, or like service.

3. *Policy*

As in the case of the Sunday school, it will be the aim to enlist all the helpers possible—officers, teachers, class leaders, and all Christians connected with the various organizations and the church itself.

When the time for the revival campaign has been fixed care will be taken to insure a clear field for the work, be the period for a week, a month, or longer. The members of the committee will, of course, advise their respective organizations of the time selected, that they may plan their meetings and their work accordingly. Even regular meetings of such societies should not be held if the hour of meeting conflicts with any service of the campaign. The members of the society should make a special effort to be present at the revival service at such a time, thus testifying to their interest and lending their practical support. It should be possi-

ble to run the campaign without embarrassment "full speed ahead."

Those having the matter in charge will see to it that announcement of the proposed services is made, using every available agency including public and private invitation, pastoral letters, church calendar, local newspapers, attractive invitation cards, etc. This is highly important. It must needs be thoroughly done or the people who should be reached may not even know what is planned. It were well to accentuate the announcements further by a series of cottage or neighborhood prayer meetings wherever practical. These meetings may be held during one or two weeks preceding the regular campaign, on evenings when no service is held at the church. Several meetings may be held simultaneously on one night in different parts of the parish. Thus two or three nights a week may be used profitably. The number of meetings held will be de-

terminated by the size of the parish and the number of available, competent leaders. The meetings should not exceed an hour and a half in length. They should begin on time and end promptly. All the neighbors should be invited personally to be present, and at the meetings attention should be called to the plans for the future and the interest and personal help of all Christians solicited for the whole campaign. Yet the spirit of devotion and of prayer should be dominant. Conversions may take place. Sometimes the most effective results will be realized in these small group meetings. Each meeting will have a leader—the best leader available. The leaders may be members of the committee on evangelism, or others more competent may be appointed, if accessible.

If the pastor is to be his own evangelist, unless he be a veritable genius, he may at once deepen the interest

by requesting individual members of his committee, each representing his own organization, to give the revival addresses at meetings during a full week or more. This will tend to tie both leaders and their organizations to the work.

The writer is convinced that when the revival meeting is under way there is no more important factor in promoting success or insuring failure than the manner in which the invitation is presented. Careful preparation for "casting the net" should be made. Whether seekers are urged to show their desire by lifting their hands, standing, coming forward to the altar, going to an inquiry room, or signing a card—one or more—the evangelist needs the most complete mastery of himself and the situation and the certain and conscious presence of God's Holy Spirit. We would urge pastors to study to master this part of the service where so many fail. The invi-

tation service must not be unduly lengthened, yet many a campaign has been saved by tenacity in some one or more after meetings.

Friday night may be set aside as young people's night, with a special program and appeal.

Of course pains will be taken to provide attractive music and magnetic musical leadership for all the services. Not highly artistic solos lacking in personal interest, but sympathetic, spiritual hymns intelligently and earnestly sung are desirable.

The pastor should be the busiest man in the community. His mornings will be given to the devotional and intellectual preparation necessary for the evening service. Afternoons will be spent largely in pastoral visitation, following up inquirers and promising cases, however little or great their apparent interest. A list of all such persons will be kept carefully, with the names of all who make decision

for Christ, and before the campaign is over, or within a week thereafter, if possible, the pastor should call personally on all such and satisfy himself of their religious status. If light has not come he may be able to lead them out of the shadows. Most of those who have accepted Christ, he will be able to welcome into church fellowship. They may be received a few at a time on successive Sundays during the campaign, or in a large company on the last Sunday or the Sunday following. This pastoral visitation is especially important, as it relates to the children and the young people. It is usually best to confer with parents concerning their children who have shown religious interest. To enlist the sympathetic assistance of parents often means a rich Christian life for the children. Frequently irreligious parents are brought to Christ as the pastor thus confers with them concerning their children. This pas-

toral work, requiring it may be more than a hundred calls in a week, is hard, hard work. It would be drudgery were it not so blessed and vital. If not done, a large part of the really effective work of the meetings may be lost to the church. When carefully and prayerfully pursued, this pastoral evangelism will often produce a fruitage otherwise undreamed of.

Then, if results are to be conserved, following the revival effort there will be weeks and months of constructive work, during which the great vitalities of the faith will be made the familiar and intimate property, in so far as possible, of all the converts. The medium of instruction and inspiration will be the regular church services and such special classes as the number and state in life of the converts may require. There should be special instruction for children, for young people, and also for adults.

Such a method, quickened by the

principles enunciated in the foregoing chapters, should be effective in promoting religious interest and decision for Christ in any community.

Having the willing spirit, two things are essential that successful revival service may be achieved in a church and its community: First, *plan the work*. Second, *work the plan*.

II. FOR A COMMUNITY MOVEMENT

The fundamental principles for a community revival movement are to be found in the plans detailed above, be there two, or three, or more churches involved.

1. *Leadership*

As the leaders of their respective churches, the pastors must agree upon the proposition to unite their forces for an aggressive Christian movement. They may decide that they will be their own evangelists, arranging a plan of rotation in preaching. Then it is profitable and advisable to employ a

Gospel singer, who can do solo work and organize and lead a chorus choir. Or they may agree upon an evangelist who will conduct the meetings under their direction, freeing them for pastoral work and personal evangelism. Even when the evangelist is secured, the Gospel singer and leader is an advantage.

2. *Support*

a. Additional helpers will be necessary. As in the case of the local church, the official boards of all the churches should dedicate themselves as organizations and as individuals to the holy enterprise.

b. From each board a select number of competent members should be appointed to organize the campaign and execute its plans. Such appointments should be made as to include, in so far as possible, the key men of the churches and the community, so that every virile organization in every

church will be enlisted and every pressing need of the neighborhood considered. Since a community movement will incur expenses in excess of those of a single church, it is wise to make provision, through a finance committee, for such expenses, whether for evangelists, singers, hymn books, printing, adjustment of church property, or what not. This should be done before the meetings begin, so that anxiety from this cause will not deter the work. Of course other essential matters, as music, ushering, publicity and printing, personal work, young people's work, etc., will be carefully planned for and performed by competent subcommittees.

3. *Policy*

Practically all the matters essential for a local campaign are present in a community movement, but in an enlarged form. Because it is a community activity even greater care should be exercised, lest social or other

enterprises interfere. A more general advertising scheme, which will reach to every home and individual in the community, can be planned and realized. Following is the copy of an actual joint pastoral letter used to announce what was called "The H—— Christian Movement of 1911." This letter was mailed to every member of the uniting churches. Several times during the campaign other communications were mailed or distributed to every family in the town. These letters were printed as attractively as possible.

H——, N. Y., January 10, 1911.

Dear Fellow Christian:

GREETING! We, the pastors of the churches, salute you! May yours be a prosperous New Year! The greeting, though tardy, is none the less sincere.

And there's a reason. It is a matter for congratulation that there has been such a feeling of hearty good will between the churches of H——. It is our desire to encourage and increase all kindly feeling. Surely, all will be happy to aid to this glorious end.

O yes! there's a way. A joint committee from our churches has arranged for a series of evangelistic services to begin Sunday, January 29. Your pastors are to be the preachers of the evangel. We are to be assisted by a widely known and very successful gospel singer, Mr. J. J. Lowe, of Philadelphia, a co-worker with the world-famed Dr. Chapman, of the Evangelistic Committee of the Presbyterian General Assembly. The meetings are to continue nightly for three or four weeks. Other meetings will be announced. We bespeak for you a hearty interest in all the work planned. Such interest means SUCCESS. We know EVERYONE can help in some way. Will YOU not cooperate with us in one or more of the following plans?—

1. Arrange business and social matters to avoid any conflict with the meetings, so that you can be present.

2. Attend such preliminary Neighborhood Meetings, soon to begin, as may be held near your home.

3. Make available your talent for song, or as a Christian visitor, or usher, or adviser in the meetings, by joining the large volunteer choir, or some one of the committees on work indicated.

4. If you are a "shut-in" for any reason,

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still you can help by pleading conversation with and unceasing prayer for the unsaved friends of your household and social circle.

Yes, help a little; and let that little be as large as possible.

The time for preparation is short. Please decide at once to be an aggressive part of this community-wide movement. Then, without delay, indicate your decision by signing and handing to your pastor the card inclosed, giving you a particular place in our great campaign. **DO IT NOW!**

As pastors we pledge you that we shall put our most earnest and strenuous effort into this work. We are determined, by God's help—and yours—to make this movement a success. We refuse to be responsible for failure. We know we shall succeed if our people but devote themselves to the Lord's work. We must count on you. Can we?

Hand and heart go with this New Year's Greeting and Appeal. Taking Philippians 3. 13, 14 as our Year Text, let us march forth, singing in our hearts,

“Onward, Christian soldiers!
Marching as to war,
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before.”

"This one thing I do!" God help us all!

In Christian Love and Labor.

Yours faithfully,

(Names of pastors.)

For a community movement a larger number of neighborhood prayer meetings can be arranged and should be. Friday night can be set apart for the young people, and the Decision Day services can be planned for all the Sunday schools. More pretentious arrangements can be made for attractive music, because of the enlarged constituency involved. All of the pastors, if wise, will be actively employed in all the services, and pastoral work will be engaged in with the greatest energy possible, that the last soul may be reached.

In addition, such a movement makes possible the promotion of a successful men's meeting to be held on Sunday afternoons. It may be advisable to secure special speakers, one for each men's meeting. At any rate, every

plan should be so perfect as to assure a powerful and successful service. If there be factories near, it may be well to arrange noonday meetings. They will be brief necessarily, but if tactfully conducted they will advertise favorably, and consequently increase the attendance at the evening services.

It will be well to provide some sort of device so that the church preferences of converts may be declared at the time of commitment. This may save embarrassment and friction. A card with a pledge decision to be signed with name, address, date, and church preference is a simple and effective provision. A signature should be significant. It is so considered in any legal document, and elsewhere. Why not in a matter of religious decision? Only be sure that the signature has been written in good faith, after serious conviction and earnest consecration to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

When a community movement is planned it is a matter of great concern that the best meeting place be selected. One of the church buildings should be decided upon. Which one, good judgment and Christian prudence will determine. Usually the evening services of the campaign should be conducted in the same place throughout. To change is confusing.

Such a movement as this in an ordinary community partakes of a social and educational, as well as a religious character, harmonizing and unifying the powers of righteousness. It is well worth while.

The aim has been to present plans which are suggestive rather than exhaustive. Situations differ. Some means which may be used with eminent success in one place may fail utterly in another. Principles are essential. Plans and methods are variable. A precise knowledge of condi-

tions will enable pastors and helpers to plan to meet their own situation specifically. The great need is that aggressive evangelism become the universal practice of our Christian churches—the rule, not the exception. Our Father is more willing to give than his children are to receive. Given the burden for souls, then plans will be formed and work wrought, seed sown and harvest reaped.

There are extraordinary religious movements such as are conducted by Dr. Chapman and Mr. Alexander, the Rev. William A. Sunday and others. We believe that the fundamental principles upon which they operate are presented, both as to spirit and practice, in the preceding pages. We need not present their very elaborate organization plans, for when a general movement in a population center is contemplated, such honored and highly favored evangelists are invited, and they bring their own plans with them.

In conclusion, we pray, *first*, that the zeal for God's house may so consume pastors and people that, *second*, more and more it will be a fact that the churches will give themselves to the proclamation of the evangel in usual and in special services.

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Burgwin, William Harry, b. 1868.
Practical evangelism, by William
New York, Cincinnati, The Methodist
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